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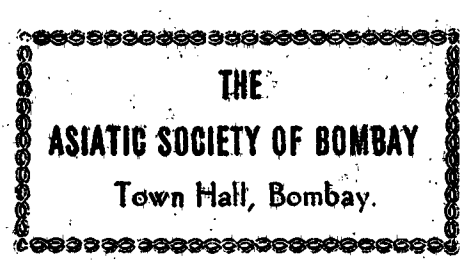

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TRAVELS

IN

THE WESTERN CAUCASUS,

&c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE WARRIOR'S RETURN.

Published by Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street 1838.

TRAVELS

IN THE

WESTERN CAUCASUS,

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INCLUDING A TOUR THROUGH

IMERITIA, MINGRELIA, TURKEY, MOLDAVIA, GALICIA,
SILESIA, AND MORAVIA,
IN 1836.

BY EDMUND SPENCER, ESQ.
Author of "Travels in Circassia," &c.

Z.C.

A TURKISH COFFEE HOUSE ON THE BOSPHORUS.

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VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1838.

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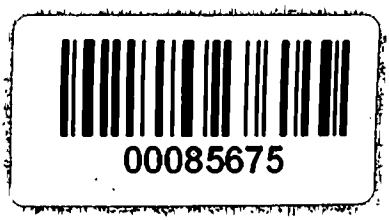

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TRAVELS

IN THE

WESTERN CAUCASUS,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

Departure for Imeritia—Romantic character of the scenery —The alp Mquinvari—Superstitious belief of the Caucasians respecting it—Sources of the Caucasian rivers—Arrival at Kuthaissi—The Imeritian district Ledschgumi —Fertility of the soil, and its natural productions—Peasantry of Imeritia—Contrasted with the inhabitants of the Western Caucasus — Ukase of the Emperor Nicholas, for the encouragement of officers to serve in the army of the Caucasus—Some account of the war between the Circassians and Tartars.

HAVING completely refreshed ourselves at the house of the excellent elder Alaek Aiti, we rose with Aurora, and prepared to quit the territory of the confederated tribes of the Western Caucasus. To prevent suspicion from being excited

in the minds of the Russian soldiery, should we encounter any, we exchanged the Circassian turban of black Astrakan fur and scarlet cloth, for the towering Mingrelian cap of lamb skin; and that we might appear peaceable in our intentions, we divested ourselves of the rifle, merely retaining the sabre, together with the poniard and pistols in our belts; thus, enveloped in the ample folds of the tchaouka, we rather resembled a party of quiet Mingrelian peasants, than the fierce enemies of Russian aggression. Our worthy host and his followers, also, most courteously exchanged our weary horses for their own hardy surefooted animals; so, once more well mounted, and accompanied as usual by the whole male population of the district, we commenced our journey to the Tzcheness-tzquali, a river that separates Mingrelia from Imeritia. We might have taken a shorter route by following the Mecu-Enguri to Anakria, on the Mingrelian coast; but by so doing, we should have been condemned to a dreary ride through the swamps and interminable forests bordering the Euxine in that direction; besides being exposed to the danger

of suffering from the malaria, with which nearly the whole of the Odischi district, on to the mouth of the Phase, is infested, with the exception of a few months in winter.

It was impossible that any country could have been more delightfully picturesque and romantic than that in the vicinity of the Tzcheness-tzquali: the river itself, here and there like a cataract, was at one time seen bursting through the clefts of rocks of terrific elevation, then, taking a serpentine course, it irrigated fairy valleys, abounding with all the productions of the most favoured climes: there was the myrtle, the laurel, and the olive; thick groves of oleander and pomegranate; while the wild vine, the fig, and the mulberry, intermingled with the choicest fruit trees and innumerable species of parasitical plants, formed bowers at once fragrant and luxuriant.

Nor were these the only attractions in this singular and beautiful region, for at every elevated point, as we left the river, and followed some less circuitous path across a mountain ridge, landscapes at once splendid and extensive burst upon

our view; in addition to the stupendous Elberous, the Mquinvari marked its majestic outline upon the horizon, together with the distant scarcely defined range of mountains inhabited by the Lesghi.

The Mquinvari (ice mountain, in the Mingrelian dialect,) is exactly in the form of a sugar loaf, being covered even down to its base with eternal snow and ice: this arises from its very elevated situation, as it is in fact, like the Elberous, an alp upon a ridge of high mountains. This magnificent alp, considerably higher than Mont Blanc, is but seldom visible from any of the mountain heights in the Western Caucasus, owing to the Elberous or some other lofty peak intercepting the view. The neighbouring tribes, the Ossetinians, call it the *Zeresti-zub* (*mountain of Christ*), conformably with a legend which says that our Redeemer once resided in a splendid palace in the interior of the ice-clad alp,—superb beyond description, being built of white marble and crystal, and containing among other treasures, "the tent of Abraham, the fiery chariot that conveyed Elijah to heaven, the cradle of

Christ, and the identical dove that Noah dispatched from the ark, to ascertain whether the waters of the flood were yet dried up!"

These traditions, and various others of a similar nature, so widely circulated, and so generally believed by the Caucasians,—however absurd and fanciful they may be—afford sufficient evidence of the existence of Christianity at some former period.

The Suoni tribes have also a peculiar appellation for their gigantic neighbour, the Elberous, calling it Passi; and, like the other tribes, imagine it to be the abode of some mighty spirit, with his myriads of attendants.

We had not proceeded many miles on the banks of the Tzcheness-tzquali* when we took a

* Nearly the whole of the rivers that water the Caucasus and the adjoining provinces have their source in the seas of eternal ice that cover the stupendous Elberous and the chain of alps that extend to the Mquinvari. The Phase, the Mecu-Enguri, the Khopi, the Tzcheness-tzquali, and other insignificant streams which flow through Imeritia and Mingrelia, take their rise only a few miles distant from each other in the Elberous, whose base is situated at no great distance from the district inhabited by the Suoni tribes. None of these rivers are navigable, except the Enguri, the Khopi, and the Phase, and these only for a few wersts from the coast.

more southerly direction, and came to the Phase, for, in this land of nature, rivers and the luminaries of heaven are the only indications which a traveller has to guide him on his route. We were, however, aided by the experience of the Suoni chief, Alaek Aiti, for without some such assistance it would have been impossible to attempt a passage through this most inaccessible country—a term which may be applied, in a greater or less degree, to the whole of the mountain districts I had traversed in the interior of the Caucasus. Indeed, no description can convey an accurate idea of the fearfully wild and romantic character of the region through which we now passed, each successive gorge and deep defile being more formidable and intricate than the other; here our narrow path was overhung by jutting crags, — there by an impenetrable arch, composed of the foliage of virgin forests and brushwood, through which we were frequently obliged to hew a passage with the axe: a country admirably adapted to the guerilla, who would defend the passes of his country; or the bandit, who would plunder the passing traveller;

since nothing could be easier than for a single warrior to exterminate a whole party before they would be able to discover his retreat.

On leaving the country of the confederated tribes of the Western Caucasus, the first district we entered in Imeritia was Ledschgumi. This beautiful country abounds in all the choicest productions of nature: with a soil capable of nourishing a vast population, it is also blessed with a climate the most salubrious and bracing to the constitution, for here, the mountains being of no great altitude, and shelving down to the plains of Mingrelia and Gourial, there is no obstruction whatever to deprive the land of the mild breezes of the south.

Notwithstanding all these advantages, the country is wild, solitary, and neglected; for, with the exception of a few miserable hamlets, more resembling the habitations of beavers than the dwellings of man, we did not see a single village till we came to Kuthaissi, once the capital of Imeritia, but now so ruinous and depopulated as scarcely to deserve the name of a town.

The few natives we encountered bore every

mark of extreme indigence,—were slovenly in their dress, and in everything appertaining to their domestic concerns. How different from their sturdy neighbours, the mountaineers of the Caucasus, whose patriotism and independent spirit elevates them to such a decided superiority over the whole of the neighbouring tribes who had formerly acknowledged, or at present recognise, the supremacy of Turkey and Persia!

These people, having their best energies chilled by despotism and slavery, with scarcely any interest in the land they cultivate, beyond that of producing a miserable subsistence for their families, have become, owing to the uncertain tenure upon which they hold their property, recklessly careless as to the future, and negligent in everything that concerns their existence. They also submit to be transferred from one potentate to another, with as much apathy as if they were a herd of cattle.

Although Imeritia and the neighbouring provinces acknowledge the Emperor of Russia as their sovereign lord, his power is merely nominal,

the inhabitants being still in a state of feudal vassalage to their chiefs and elders, who, taught by their late masters, the rapacious Turks, still exercise over their vassals, with little remission, the same system of extortion.

The mountaineer of the Caucasus, on the other hand, secure in his natural fastness, enjoys, undisturbed, the patrimony of his ancestors. He rambles over the same mountains with his flocks and herds as they did; cultivates the same vine, drinks out of the same brook, and reposes under the same gigantic oak, that perhaps has already seen a thousand winters. Every valley, gorge, and cliff, reminds him of the strength of his mountain home, and imparts courage and manliness to his actions; while, being neither exposed to the exactions of a rapacious lord, nor impoverished by the imposition of taxes, he cultivates every spot with diligence, and increases the number of his flocks and herds, which he knows will not be carried off by the inroads of an enemy, or go to swell the coffers of some rapacious governor.

Unconquered and unconquerable, he believes

himself to be superior to the whole human race, and it is owing to the indulgence of feelings like these, and to the enjoyment of his wild independence, that he prefers his humble retreat to the luxuriant abode of the lowland slave, for such is every man in his opinion that dwells in a plain, or who has ever bowed the knee to a foreign lord. These are the feelings that cause him so recklessly to sacrifice life, and to display such extraordinary heroism in defence of his country, its laws and institutions.

We cannot be surprised that the mountaineer of the Caucasus should consider himself so superior to the rest of mankind, when he contrasts his own state of independence with that of his neighbours, the degraded serfs of Russia and Turkey; and, secluded as he is from intercourse with the world, that he should regulate his opinions of every other nation by the same standard is but too natural.

Perhaps no trait in the character of a Circassian prince is more amusing than his haughtiness, and the contemptuous disdain with which he speaks of every country and people except his own.

A simple chieftain, at the head of a few hundred followers, considers himself as truly a sovereign, and as important a personage, as the autocrat of all the Russias,—and probably even more so, for he marches to the field of battle with his clansmen, and never deserts them, in victory or defeat, while a single man remains living,—valour being in his opinion, and in that of his followers, the essence of all that is great and noble in human nature, and without which no man is worthy of being invested with sovereign authority. He is also as conversant with the genealogy of his family, and traces its high antiquity as confidently, as the representative of the oldest and noblest family in aristocratic Germany. In one respect, the Circassian knight has, it must be confessed, substantial ground for congratulating himself on the purity of his lineage, his country having been, in a great measure, owing to its peculiar situation, exempt from those inundating countless hosts which have, from time to time, swept away whole nations, without leaving any other memorial of their existence than a name. Hence the inhabitants have preserved their race more un-

mixed than perhaps any other on the globe, and in the nineteenth century present the picture of a people the same, with but few shades of difference, as when visited by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

Even the pretended divine mission of Mahomet, and the conquests consequent upon it, which subverted nearly the whole of the religious establishments of Asia and Africa, and shook some of the governments of Europe to their foundation, failed to produce any change in the government, and but very little in the religion, of the people of the Caucasus. In short, every attempt of the most successful generals, from remote antiquity to the present day, to subdue its warlike tribes has proved ineffectual. Notwithstanding all their feuds, the appearance of an enemy is sufficient to induce amity, cement alliances, and to prompt them to raise an army, when every private wrong, every meditated revenge, is forgotten in the preparation for defence.

With so many obstacles to contend against, having to combat with a people who, animated by the traditions of their fathers, imitate them in

heroic bravery, is it probable that the Emperor of Russia will be more successful in his meditated conquest of the Caucasus, than the chiefs of those powerful empires who have attempted that difficult task before him? My readers are already acquainted with the inaccessible nature of the country, and the courage of the inhabitants. But this is not all; the people whom Russia has to deal with, according to ancient usage, and the spirit of their religion, keep no treaties with an enemy, to exterminate whom, by every means in their power, is a duty paramount to every other.

Whatever temporary advantages Russia may have gained in the struggle, however strong she may consider herself, fenced in with the cannon of her forts on the coast, and however unreservedly some of the tribes may appear to submit to her rule, from all that I have heard and witnessed, it is nothing more than a ruse of the wily Circassian to lure the enemy into the interior of the country, in order to insure their destruction.*

* The late disastrous reverses experienced by the Russian arms in the Caucasus, and the difficulty of procuring

In the same manner they retired before the Turks, Tartars, and Persians, without offering the slightest resistance, until the troops of the enemy, having become wasted by disease, and destitute of pro-

officers of merit to assume the command of an army suffering from a succession of defeats, obliged the cabinet of St. Petersburg, a few months since, to issue an ukase, offering unusual advantages to any officer that might enter the army of the Caucasus. The ukase is to the following effect:—

"Each officer who may volunteer to take service in the army of the Caucasus will receive one year's pay in advance; and during the time he continues to serve in that army, he will moreover receive double the amount of pay enjoyed by those in the ordinary service.

"The expenses consequent on marching and transportation will be defrayed by the government.

"The pay and perquisites of each officer as agreed upon, although accounted for in paper money, will be paid in silver, each silver rouble being reckoned as equivalent to four of paper."

Hence we may conclude, that every officer serving in the army of the Caucasus will cost the Russian government nearly six times the amount of one engaged in any other part of the empire, and that the war in the Caucasus will be carried on with redoubled vigour; and as we have already shewn that the Circassians, on their part, are making great exertions to defend their independence, and encourage deserters from the military settlements of the Cossacks by the offer of lands and privileges, we may anticipate that the ensuing campaign will be one of more than ordinary interest.

visions, the whole nation flew to arms, and compelled them to retreat, or to purchase a dear-bought peace.

A most striking instance of this policy of the Circassian knights is recorded in the chronicles of the Tartars, as having been practised towards Menglé Gerai, one of the most powerful khans of Krim-Tartary, who, determining to subdue the Caucasus, raised an army, say the Tartar historians, of upwards of a hundred and fifty thousand men, and, accompanied by his two brothers, Bachti Gerai and Murad Gerai, and all the grandees of his empire, renowned for their skill and intrepidity as warriors, marched into the two Kabardahs, the stronghold of the Circassian knights, where he was met by the principal chiefs and elders of that people, dressed in sackcloth, and wearing a rope girdle about their waist, in token of their submission.

After the peace had been concluded, and the Circassian chieftains had apparently with good faith and willingness consented to become the vassals of the Tartar Khan, a general rejoicing was proclaimed throughout the camp. But no

sooner had the army abandoned themselves to revelry, than thousands of fierce warriors descended, like a mighty torrent, from the hills, and, according to the phraseology of the writer, seemed to spring out of the earth, when they massacred, without mercy, the greater part of the army, the Khan himself narrowly escaping with the remnant of his troops, leaving his two brothers and the flower of his army dead on the field of battle.

This disastrous defeat of the Tartars took place on the twenty-eighth of the holy Rhamadhan, in the year of the Hegira 1141, A.D. 1729. The field of battle is still called by the Circassians the Krymean; and so fatal was the effects of this reverse to the power of the Khans of Krim-Tartary, that it is said to have accelerated their downfall.

CHAPTER II.

Concluding observations upon the inhabitants of the Western Caucasus and their form of government.

HAVING already said so much relative to the manners, customs, mode of living, form of government, and political situation of these singular and interesting people, any lengthened details on these subjects must be unnecessary.

If it were possible, however, to compile a history from their traditions, there cannot be a doubt it would be found valuable and curious, since it might tend to elucidate many events of the highest importance relative to the nations that in past ages resided in their vicinity, many of whom have left no record, save their name. This is the more to be desired, as nearly the whole of the authenticated accounts of the Byzantines and other writers have been destroyed by the Mongul

Tartars and Turks in this part of Asia and Europe.

It is, then, to the Circassian bards that we must, on these points, look for information,—to the songs and traditions which are universally sung and recited throughout the Caucasus, from the Euxine to the Caspian Sea.

Many of these traditions have been found strictly to accord with history. I have already shewn their familiarity with the story of the Scythians and Amazons; and they are as well acquainted with the inroads of the Mongul Tartars, the history of the Muscovites, the conquests of Mahomet, and the downfall of the Greeks, as we are ourselves.

An intimate knowledge of the various tribes, and of their peculiar dialects, together with the genealogy of the Circassian princes, will best tend to facilitate the research of the antiquarian traveller.

Reineggs, the Russian agent in the Caucasus, in his notice of the different tribes inhabiting that country, says, he discovered a remnant of the ancient Alanes; Gärber, another agent, who also

wrote an account of his visit to the provinces on the Caspian Sea, says, that the Magyars of Hungary formerly dwelt among the Circassians in the Great and Little Kabardah. The former gentleman also particularly alludes to the Caucasian tribe called Albon, possibly a remnant of English crusaders who had escaped from the Turks, and settled in the mountain fastnesses of the Caucasus; be this as it may, the Circassian knights have still in their possession a number of weapons that once belonged to the crusaders, and one of the most current traditions among them says, that a colony of Frengi (Franks) once resided among them.

All my attempts to procure any information respecting the tribe called Albon,* and the precise district they inhabit, were fruitless, though, I confess, I was not a little industrious in my inquiries, for I could not altogether divest myself of some latent hope of discovering a people who, if they did not speak my native language, might perhaps display some traits in their customs, manners, and habits, similar to those of our own country.

* In all probability the tribe alluded to is a remnant of the Scythian Alba, or Albani.

This much I may assert, so far as regards the Circassians generally, that if any number of that people were to assemble, clothed and educated in a similar manner with the best specimens of our own population, it would be difficult to distinguish the one from the other, so similar are they in form and features, except that the sun of Asia has given a deeper brown to their complexion, and more fire to their eyes.

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of the Circassians is, their unostentatious plainness and simplicity of manners; these are exhibited in their laws and form of government, nay, in every act of their social intercourse; and if we are to estimate the value of a form of government by its good or ill effects on the general condition of the people, then we must pronounce that of the Circassians to be admirably adapted to the wants of a primitive, a pastoral people.

It is true, the Western Caucasus cannot boast of splendid towns and villages, rich capitalists, extensive landed proprietors, and all the pomp and artificial wants that these give rise to. But if splendour is unknown, so also is indigence; the

majority of the people are decently clothed, possess numerous flocks and herds, cultivate their own fields, and dwell in cots which, though humble, suit the climate, and answer every purpose of a people unacquainted with the luxuries of civilized life.

Their moderation and general orderly habits are equally deserving commendation; for although they enjoy the most unbounded liberty, it is rarely abused. The rule of the chiefs, to whom they are obedient and devoted, is mild and equable; these, being generally chosen from among the most valorous and wise among their princes, they follow with confidence to the field, and defend against every peril; and such is the harmony and good understanding subsisting between the chief and his clansmen, that the social compact is very rarely violated.

Notwithstanding the predatory habits of the people when abroad and engaged in war, theft at home is rarely committed, and always punished with the greatest severity.

The inexorable spirit of revenge, and the firm determination evinced by the Caucasians of ob-

taining ample satisfaction for blood, however repugnant to our feelings, have their good effects upon a people of such an excitable temperament,—the whole population, well knowing "that he who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," practise considerable self-restraint in their quarrels. Again, when two tribes resort to open violence, the contest is seldom of long duration, and never so fatal in its consequences as might be expected,—the law that a compensation must be made to the friends of the slain, being universally recognised and strictly enforced, operates as a powerful curb upon their fiery dispositions.

Their regulations with respect to criminals are more merciful than those of the most civilized nations of Europe, the punishment of death never being inflicted except for murder, and in such cases, even this can be compromised with the friends of the deceased by the payment of a large fine.

The form of the constitution of these people is at once republican, aristocratical, and even monarchical when applied to some of the tribes, the prerogatives of whose chieftain are those of

a sovereign and a military leader, and who exercises his authority as an hereditary right. This is a singular anomaly in the history of nations, more particularly as the Caucasians have no written laws to be governed by, common sense being their only guide, and long-established usage their only code; nevertheless, their system of governing has endured for ages: and when we consider the slight degree of restraint it imposes upon the people, and its simple patriarchal form, we must admire the tractableness of a population who can be ruled with so little coercion.

The origin of this form of government is not difficult to trace to its source. In the infancy of the world, the inhabitants were probably taught to revere and respect the authors of their being; and in process of time, when families multiplied into tribes, the oldest and wisest member of the community naturally assumed the office of judge and peacemaker, while the brave and impetuous spirit led the way to the chace, then to the battle, and ultimately became chief. Such a man being renowned for valour and wisdom, his followers

increased, who, proud to serve under so famous a leader, remained firmly attached to his standard, gratefully acknowledged his protecting influence during life, and deeply lamented him in death. It was also natural that his firstborn, the beloved of his father, should succeed to his authority. Hence originated hereditary government, and the formation of a numerous body of aristocracy, which, however, preserved the spirit of republicanism.

Such is the government of this isolated people, which has been, with few exceptions, preserved from time immemorial,—each tribe being subject to the jurisdiction of its own ruler,—a people whose lot in life we may rather envy than pity, for if we except knowledge, which, by the perverseness of human nature, is too often converted into a curse rather than a blessing, they are possessed of all which can gild man's earthly existence—a just and equable government, composed of their own patriarchal chiefs, which ensures to each individual the peaceable enjoyment of his rights and property,—and a country whose exuberant fertility supplies every want at the expense only of as much labour as may deliver the husbandman from the

tedium of idleness. In addition to this, the mountaineer of the Caucasus can range from dale to hill, from valley to mountain, with his flocks and herds, or chace the game in his native woods, without fear of losing the one through the incursions of a foreign depredator, or being controlled when pursuing the other by the arbitrary will of a feudal lord; and when in the evening he returns to his home, it is to enjoy all the charities of domestic life, and he reposes in peace, confident that no tyrant will invade the sanctuary of his hearth, and conscious that the deer as it bounds through the woods is not more free than himself.

It is true, I saw the inhabitants of the Western Caucasus under circumstances the most favourable to the national character: a sense of their common danger had united the whole of the tribes, many of whom had been, previous to the invasion of the Russians, hostile to each other. In short, I found the entire population animated with the best spirit of patriotism, and manifesting the most determined resolution to defend their country, and maintain, at all hazards, its independence.

CHAPTER III.

Kuthaissi—Miserable aspect of the town—Hospitable reception by an Armenian merchant—His family—Domestic manners—Mode of living—Primitive mills—Characteristics of the Armenians—Their mercenary disposition—Their religion—Their genealogical pride.

We shall now bid adieu to the Western Caucasus, and its gallant inhabitants. I have already said that we arrived at Kuthaissi; prettily situated on the right bank of the Phase, and which makes rather a splendid figure when first seen in the distant landscape. But on arriving there, the illusion of its beauty entirely disappeared, for we found nothing but narrow streets and dirty bazaars, nearly blocked up by stalls of every description, from the cobler's and the tinker's to the vendors' of cashmere shawls and gold embroidered muslins.

In one place, pyramids of corn and fruit were

offered for sale,—in another, mutton and sturgeon were being sold by greasy looking fellows to the half-starved, squalid peasants; nor were the weights and scales less noticeable for their novelty, the one being made of wood and ropes, while round stones were employed as a substitute for the others.

The greater number of the buildings were nothing better than wretched huts, intermingled here with a low shed as a stable for the cattle, and there with a house, the painted exterior of which denoted that it had seen better days. The owners of these comfortless habitations, for the most part miserable in appearance, were either basking in the sun, or squatted, enjoying the tchibouque, under a sort of verandah, the shreds of whose tattered canvass awning waved like dirty banners floating in the wind.

Such was the aspect of the town, the filth of the streets, and the wretchedness of the inhabitants, their apathy, idleness, slovenliness, with *slave* imprinted not only on their countenance, but expressed in their whole manner and bearing, that I wished myself back again in the free

mountains of Circassia,—where every breeze wafted health and vigour, where every man was master of his own actions, where a bag of gold would not procure a night's lodging, but where the stranger, once received as a friend, would be certain of being everywhere treated with the most unbounded hospitality.

Notwithstanding my unfavourable picture of Kuthaissi, we fared well within its dilapidated walls, having taken up our quarters at the house of an Armenian merchant, who it appears has contrived to amass a considerable fortune by means of his contraband commerce with the tribes of the Western Caucasus. Profuse in his hospitality towards his distinguished guests, he set before us a repast consisting of every delicacy the oriental cuisine could supply,—the wily merchant well knowing how much it was his interest to conciliate and flatter the chiefs of a people to whom he was indebted for so large a share of wealth.

The character of hakkim which I assumed on first entering the Caucasus, with a view of obtaining an insight into the domestic manners of the

inhabitants, I found extremely advantageous to me in these provinces, as it ensured me a hospitable reception, independently of my being the guest of a Circassian chief.

To the women of the household of the Armenian merchant I administered a few pills, composed of rhubarb and magnesia, which was the means of introducing me into the sanctum sanctorum—the kitchen; and while my patients were mustering courage to engulph the health-giving boluses, I employed myself in taking a sketch of the interior and its multifarious articles.

The *tout ensemble* differed but little from that in the house of any Circassian chieftain, except that the various culinary utensils were more numerous, and of a more expensive material, being principally composed of copper, and kept remarkably clean.

The great variety of dishes that constitute an oriental repast very much surprise a European, and must employ a number of hands in preparing them. Our host, besides his wife and daughters, maintained several female slaves, all of whom, during our stay, were incessantly occupied in their culinary labours.

Kid, mutton, fish, poultry, game, &c., were the principal ingredients; and these were served in every possible form; neither were they in any degree unpalatable; on the contrary, many would have satisfied even a fastidious European taste.

Rice, dates, honey, clarified butter, and fruits of every kind, also entered into the composition of many of their dishes; while thin wheaten or barley cakes, toasted on the embers, or baked in little portable ovens, formed no bad substitute for the white rolls of Europe.

Among the different utensils of the kitchen, my attention was attracted to the hand-mills by means of which they generally reduce their corn to meal, particularly the millet and other light grain. This most primitive mill, found in the house of every inhabitant of the Caucasus, was perhaps the first machine invented by the ingenuity of man at the commencement of the world.

It consists of two circular stones, from two to three feet in diameter; the upper one, which has a handle, and an aperture to receive the wheat, is convex in shape, while the lower is concave. Of course the operation of reducing corn to meal by the agency of such a machine is tedious and tiresome, for; as the upper stone must be briskly turned round, the employment is heartily disliked by the women,—the most industrious efforts of one strong damsel being insufficient to grind such a supply as will serve for the consumption of a large family in one day. The female slaves, however, take the mill in turn, otherwise the patience of the most patient would be exhausted; as it is, they generally carol as gaily to the monotonous

sound of the mill as our own domestics do to the equally monotonous music of their spinning-wheels.

The Armenians are in Asia what the Jews are in Europe—dealers in silver and gold, and are engaged in every branch of trade which does not require manual labour; and, like them, they form an entirely distinct race from the nations among whom they dwell, differing from them in religion, manners, and customs; and also, like the tribes of Israel, their individuality as a people is marked in their physical conformation in characters which cannot be mistaken.

In every commercial transaction they exhibit a degree of cunning, shrewdness, tact, and it must be added, selfishness, unapproached by any other people; for if a farthing of profit is to be extracted from a bargain, an Armenian is certain to make it. In these propensities they completely exemplify the Turkish proverb, which says—

"A Greek can cheat a Turk; a Jew will cozen a Greek; but an Armenian will trick not only a Jew, but *Schaitan* (the devil) himself; and where an Armenian is, a Jew must starve."

During the various invasions of Persia and Turkey by Russia, the Armenians rendered that power, as guides, spies, and agents, the most important services; in return for which, they enjoy many privileges as settlers in the empire, and, as merchants and pedlers, are fettered with few restrictions.

Notwithstanding the ruling passion of the Armenians is avarice, they can be faithful, as they are engaged in preference to any other people by the Circassians as ambassadors to Turkey and Persia, and as guides when they pass through the dominions of the Autocrat. This servile submission to the will of the Circassian knights, I am inclined to think, arises more from fear than attachment or respect, as they well know that, if they break their faith with the inexorable sons of the Caucasus, their whole family would probably be exterminated; for of every other crime in the eyes of that people, not excepting murder, treachery is the most abhorred, and the most severely punished.

A catastrophe, exemplifying this feeling, occurred not long since in Constantinople. A Turk

betrayed a Circassian knight of the Eastern Caucasus into the power of the Russian general; and as the bravery of the chief had been very troublesome, he was shot. The Turk escaped, with the reward of his treachery, to Constantinople, where, having changed his name and place of abode, he hoped to enjoy his ill-gotten wealth in security; but no! One morning, after a few months had elapsed, the dead bodies of himself and family, dreadfully mangled, were found in the streets of Constantinople, with a Circassian dagger stuck in the throat of the delinquent. Who had done the deed none could tell, nor in what manner the assassin had escaped; the weapon, however, indicated that in all probability the hand of the avenger had been that of a Caucasian.

The wife of my host, the fair Kinsha (happiness), who was the daughter of an Abasian usden, had indeed made him happy in a numerous and healthy family; and the merchant might well exclaim, with the Psalmist, "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them!"

The girls were tall for their age, and well made, their figures being sufficiently round without ap-

proaching embonpoint; their fine eyes, large and sparkling, gave an intellectual expression to their countenances, while their pearly teeth, and the smile of good humour that played about a mouth regular in its lines as that of Canova's Venus, much improved their personal attractions. Their complexion was much darker than that of the mountaineer of the Caucasus, and might resemble that of a Spanish brunette.

Like all orientals, they manifested a decided predilection for finery, in the number of gold ornaments which decorated their hands, fingers, and ears. Their dress was similar to that of the women of the Caucasus, the Circassian princesses being the standard of feminine taste in this part of the east,—full trousers, of bright-coloured Indian cotton, and a large silk wrapper, confined by a girdle studded with gold or silver ornaments, which exhibited their forms to great advantage.

Although the Armenian women in Turkey generally appear in public closely veiled, and in their houses are seldom visible to strangers, those of our merchant were by no means rigidly excluded from society; they were also more fami-

liar, talkative, and curious, than the Caucasian women in general, while their manners seemed a mixture of the Russian and oriental, and they only wore the veil when taking a promenade.

The slaves of the household appeared to be treated with as much kindness and consideration as the domestic servants in a well-ordered family in Europe; for an interesting young girl, who was in the last stage of a consumption, was brought to me for my opinion, and as much anxiety was manifested with respect to her recovery as if she had been the only child of the family, for, when I informed them that no earthly power could save her life, the whole of the women burst into tears, and exhibited the most violent demonstrations of sorrow.

The house of our Armenian was furnished with a greater regard to show than neatness; the sofas and divans of the principal room were covered with rich silks, the floor with Persian carpets, and the walls were hung with purple velvet. Instead of the paintings of saints and angels, such as we see in the houses of those professing the Greek and Roman-catholic form of

worship, sentences from the Bible, wrought in gold characters (in the Armenian language), on a ground of the same coloured velvet, were suspended round the room.

At table we were furnished with chairs, knives, forks, and spoons,—an arrangement which sadly annoyed my friends the Circassians, who had never before made use of them, and were not a little astonished on observing my adroitness in handling these, in their opinion, very unnecessary appendages to a meal.

There was a still greater degree of pomp observed in serving the coffee, which was poured into the finest porcelain cups, resting on gold filigree stands, and then placed upon a massive tray, richly gilt and ornamented. All this splendour, however, made no impression upon the sturdy mountaineers, who despised it as useless parade and ostentation, fit only for an effeminate Turk or Persian, or a contemptible money-getting merchant.

My friend, the grave austere Inal, denounced it as the origin of every crime, as the certain indication of a state of slavery, and as the cause of

sickness in the body and feebleness in the mind. "Give me," said he, "but my mountain home, where I can roam free as the eagle that soars to heaven, my flocks and herds, and the attachment of my gallant clansmen, and I would not exchange my condition for that of the Padishah of all the Indies, with his palace of rubies and diamonds."

The total want of agreement between the exterior and interior of a house is very general in the east,—the one presenting the appearance of dirt, poverty, and negligence, and the other, of gaudy and ostentatious wealth, which was precisely that of our Armenian merchant. This arises from a desire to conceal riches, which may excite the cupidity of those in authority, and tempt them to reduce the luckless owners to the lowest stage of poverty.

I was surprised to find that the wife of my host was already a grandmother, not so much from her appearance as from the circumstance that she had only attained the age of thirty. Early marriages, the profuse use of cosmetics, to which we may add, a warm, dry climate, are the principal causes that the oriental women do not re-

tain their beauty for any length of time; like roses, they bloom, and soon wither, for at twenty-five they have fewer personal charms than an English woman possesses at fifty; and when they reach the age of thirty, they become—with all courtesy to the fair sex be it spoken—downright hags.

This observation, however, cannot be applied in its full extent to those who inhabit a mountainous country, where the bracing winds and the moisture of the climate tend so materially to preserve the freshness of the complexion. It may also be owing to their living a more retired life, and to the circumstance that the far-famed perfumery of Stamboul and Ispahan does not find its way in large quantities to these remote districts.

Some few years since, when I visited Constantinople, I resided in the house of an Armenian merchant, when I had an opportunity of studying the manners and customs of this nation, from which I feel fully convinced that a more amiable, or more truly moral people, in their conduct towards each other, does not exist; and were it

not for their sordid love of wealth, the deceit and trickery they resort to in their dealings with strangers, in order to obtain it, they would be in every respect most estimable.

The inordinate desire to obtain riches chokes up the better feelings of their nature; for this, too, many of them do not scruple to resort to any artifice, however base,—to any act, however contemptible, provided they do not compromise themselves by infringing the laws,—provided the dread of the executioner does not mingle with their future prospects.

The Armenian religion is distinguished for much greater simplicity in its ceremonies than either the Greek or Roman Catholic. Like the dissenters from the church of Rome, the Armenians pride themselves on professing the pure tenets of Christianity, as taught by our Saviour, and transmitted to them by his disciples, unalloyed by the superstitious corruptions of designing priests. They also abjure what they term the worship addressed to the Virgin as the Mother of God, asserting it to have been derived from the Lama religion, and engrafted on the religion of Christ,

for the purpose of gaining over converts in the early stage of Christianity. In proof of this, they quote the hymn of praise which the professors of the Lama faith are accustomed to use in their adorations of Darrah-Ekhe, queen of heaven. I confess it appears to me that the analogy they are pleased to find is more fanciful than real; but that my readers may judge for themselves, I have subjoined in a note a small portion of the hymn.*

The principal points upon which the Armenians differ from some of the other sects of Christianity, are the following:—They only believe in the divine, but not in the human, nature of our Saviour. That the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and not from the Son. They celebrate

* "To thee, holy Darrah-Ekhe, saviour of the world, be all honour and glory; Thou who art the giver of all good and happiness, thine be the praise. To thee, holy mother, who tramplest under thy immaculate feet the crown of the fallen angel, deliver us from the dangers of hell. To thee, holy mother, we pay all honour and adoration; thou who hast consummated all felicity in thy heavenly kingdom, to whom the exalted spirits and the angelic hosts of heaven offer eternal oblation, be glorified for ever and ever."

the birth, baptism, and appearance of Christ on the same day, the 6th of January. They abjure extreme unction, and deny the authority of the pope as spiritual head of the church. They also deny the existence of such a place as purgatory, and believe that the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the good do not commence till the day of judgment.

Many of their customs resemble those of the Jews, such as their method of slaughtering animals, and the division of them into clean and unclean, and the ceremonies observed when a marriage takes place, some of which are singular enough. On the evening preceding the bridal day, the bridegroom invites a party of his friends, who, having been divested of their beards by the hands of a barber, which he provides, are taken to a bath, and afterwards regaled with a plentiful repast; the next morning, the whole party accompany their friend to fetch his bride, when revelry and feasting are kept up for three successive days.

The history of the Armenians is involved in much obscurity: several of their own writers and

the Byzantines bear testimony to their wealth and luxury, to their extensive commercial establishments on the Euxine, their flourishing cities, and the number of caravans they employed in their trade with Persia and India before their country, Armenia, fell under the leaden rule of the Ottomans and the Persians. Since this time they have been, like the tribes of Israel, wanderers and aliens in every country in the east. Their number must be considerable, for wherever commerce flourishes there an Armenian is to be found.

Indulging their genealogical pride, the Armenians, like most oriental people, assert that, according to the tradition of their ancestors, their country was the first peopled after the flood by Noah, who, on descending from Mount Ararat, built a habitation for himself and family, and called it Nacktschiwan (new settlement), on the very spot where the little town of that name in Armenia is now situated. As if this were not enough, they assert that the language they speak was bequeathed to them by Noah, and that from Armenia the whole earth has been peopled!

The oil of Myron, used in all the Armenian

churches, is also a remnant of Judaism. This holy oil is prepared only every five years, with great secrecy, at the famous Armenian convent of Etsch Miadsin, situated at the foot of Mount Ararat, being extracted from forty plants and flowers, culled on the wild mountains of the Caucasus, during the space of forty days.

The precious mixture is afterwards delivered, with great solemnity, to all the Archimandrites belonging to the Armenian church in every part of the world, and is said to be possessed of the most supernatural powers for healing the soul and preparing it for everlasting life, and to be the oldest compound in the world, its composition having been taught by their great patriarch Noah to his descendants!

CHAPTER IV.

Departure from Kuthaissi—Journey to the Turkish frontier —Climate of Mingrelia and Gourial—Fertility of the soil and productions—Manners of the people and their religion—Their dress and external appearance.

I SEPARATED from my friend, Inal Aslan Gherrai, at Kuthaissi, from whence he was to continue his route to Georgia, and we directed our steps to the Turkish frontier. Never can I forget the kindness, hospitality, and friendly attention, I experienced from that excellent man, and I may add, from every mountaineer with whom I had any intercourse; every one of these noble fellows would have laid down his life in my defence had it been necessary.

How different was this line of conduct from what I had been led to expect,—a line of conduct which has contributed not a little to influence my

representations in their behalf, to place their character in the favourable light it deserves. In point of friendly feeling, both Russian and Circassian are the same to me, for I experienced quite as much hospitality from the one as the other, and were the Circassians undeserving of my esteem, were they the revolutionary brigands, the hordes of savages, their enemies represent them, I would have portrayed their character to my readers in its real colours.

But when we find a people so isolated from European civilization, without the advantages of being guided in their actions by the humanizing precepts of Christianity, displaying so much noble feeling, so much patriotism, in defence of their sacred rights, what Briton, educated in the principles of rational liberty, what man, with a single spark of generous feeling, would not have written as I have done, since among what other people in the world can the oppressed expect to find their rights fearlessly combated, and a sympathy excited in their behalf, but in England—the land of the brave and the free?

At parting, we mutually exchanged, according

to Oriental custom, gifts, as remembrances; and again and again did these unsophisticated sons of nature return to give me a farewell salutation, requesting me not to forget my good friends the Atteghéi, and to visit them the ensuing year. Nor did the solicitude of my kind friend, Inal, for my safety end here, as, through the medium of the merchant, he procured an Armenian guide to conduct us safely across the frontier. On my part, I must say, that it was with the utmost regret I parted from a people whom I shall ever remember with gratitude.

I had now performed the most interesting part of my tour,—the most interesting, when we consider the danger and difficulty of exploring such a country, that any traveller could have made. Various circumstances had combined to favour me; my tour was facilitated alike by Russian and Circassian, although diametrically opposed to each other in character and interest. I had visited the whole of the bays and ports on the Circassian coast,—the whole of the forts garrisoned by Russian troops,—traversed the interior of countries which had probably never before been trodden by

the foot of a European, and mingled on friendly terms with a people the most jealous of a foreigner of any existing.

Our little party had now become reduced to four persons,—the young chief, Beisroukou, the Circassian envoy to Stambouli, myself and servant, with our guide. A detailed description of my route to the Tschorak, an insignificant river, which here separates the dominions of Turkey from those of Russia, and which occupied us four days, would not be interesting, neither would it be advisable to publish the names of those elders and chiefs to whom we were indebted for hospitality, as such a proceeding could afford neither amusement nor information to the reader, and might provoke against them the anger of the autocrat. Let it suffice, that I saw enough of the natives to be able to assert with confidence, that they are friendly to the Circassian cause, and inimical to the policy and government of Russia.

Independently, however, of these considerations, on leaving Imeritia, the whole country we traversed, through Mingrelia and Gourial,—being, for the most part, a plain, rich in every species

of vegetation, abounding with extensive forests, diversified here and there by marshes,—presented such a uniformity of aspect, that in describing one league we describe the whole. The most fertile lands may be seen lying waste for want of cultivation, poisoning the atmosphere with the effluvia exhaling from their decomposed herbage. The wild vine climbs around every tree and shrub, so that the whole country resembles a vast vineyard. On the hilly lands, as well as on the plain, may be found the finest timber, together with the fruit trees common to the most favoured climes, such as the pomegranate, almond, fig, &c., besides every species of beautiful parasitical plants. How delicious, then, must be the fragrance in summer, how picturesque, verdant, and lovely the landscape!

Here were no towns and pretty rural-looking villages, with their interesting and industrious population, and which in almost every part of Europe, however neglected, offer sufficient materials to give variety and amusement to the details of an author. Even the rivers were without bridges, the country without roads, and its aspect as savage

and deserted as Germanica in the days of Tacitus. Sometimes we encountered a herd of half-wild horses, then one of buffaloes, wallowing in a marsh that once formed the bed of a river, so fierce in their antipathy to any but their herdsmen, that we were more than once in some danger of their attacking us.

Those of the inhabitants that came under my observation, however lowly in life, were not wanting in the frankness and hospitality of the Circassians. Although there was none of that freshness and vivacity so peculiar to the mountaineer, their manners could not be called rude, for they did not display any inquisitiveness as to the purport of our travelling, except to be made acquainted with the state of the war in the Caucasus, a subject of so much interest to the people of this part of Asia.

However inferior in personal appearance and physical strength to the mountaineers of the Caucasus, the inhabitants of these provinces, which at one time formed part of the kingdom of Georgia, are by no means an inferior race, when compared with the natives of Turkey and Persia in general,

and they are infinitely superior to the serfs of Russia. I should also consider the ignominious epithet *coward*, which is applied by every Caucasian to a native of the plains of Georgia, too severe when used with reference to these people, who still exhibit some appearance of martial bearing, and whose fine eyes might yet sparkle with the fire of the soldier, were they guided by the military talents of a chief of their own choice. Indeed, this opprobrious term does not originate so much in any deficiency of natural courage as from the circumstance that the natives of Georgia and of these provinces have submitted to the rule of Russia, and continue her peaceable subjects; whereas any other line of conduct would have been madness in a people whose country is, for the most part, unprovided with any natural means of defence.

It must be confessed that the general appearance of the Mingrelians and Gourials denotes slothfulness and slovenliness, partly the consequences of the exuberant fertility of the soil, and of their own low scale in the social state, which, engendering no artificial wants, they are con-

tented with merely raising so much grain as may suffice for their own consumption. In some parts they do indeed cultivate the vine somewhat extensively, and their wines are held in some repute among their neighbours; but as they keep it, like every other people in this part of Asia, in skins, the insides of which are pitched, the flavour is rendered disagreeable to the European taste.

The majority of the people profess the Greek religion, are said to be submissive to their clergy, and obedient and faithful to their feudal chiefs; they are in every respect, as far as a passing traveller can judge, a quiet orderly people; hence their arms, without which, like the mountaineers, they never go forth (at least the poniard), seem rather intended for show than use.

The women do not seclude themselves from strangers, and wherever we encountered them, either at home or in the field, we always found them usefully employed. They spin and weave, make the wearing apparel, tend the vine as well as the flocks, and employ themselves both with husbandry and the farm-yard. This constant

exercise in the open air gives an elasticity and freedom to their movements and a freshness to their complexion, which, when united to their lively dispositions and well made persons, renders them far more interesting than their lords, who, lazy and imperious, with the expression of sleepy sloth stamped on their sallow complexions, occupy themselves in little else than in smoking the tchibouque and basking in the sun.

The Imeritians are certainly superior in many respects to the Mingrelians and Gourials, as if their native hills imparted energy and spirit; for the moment we leave the province of Imeritia and descend into the plain, we observe a change in the movements and action of the people.

CHAPTER V.

Historical sketch of Imeritia, Mingrelia, and Gourial—Navigable rivers—Abundance of fish — Sturgeon—Its valuable properties in commerce—Present state of these provinces—Their relation with Russia—Means by which that power obtained possession — Remarks upon the facility of colonizing them—Feudal system still existing —Partial independence of the chiefs and elders.

THE political situation of these fine provinces, together with their great capabilities if colonized by a clever, industrious people, deserves the attention of the statesman and the traveller. Few countries were more famous in the history of the ancients, particularly in the songs of the Grecian bards, than Cholchis, of which Imeritia, Mingrelia and Gourial formed the principal part; and however insignificant, however depopulated they may have become in our day, they once maintained a numerous population.

These were the provinces that the intellectual and highly civilized sons of immortal Greece, under their great leader, Jason, colonized and taught the rude natives their arts and sciences. Subsequently they became to the hero Mithridates, king of Pontus, the granary from which he provisioned his vast armies; the forests supplied timber for his navy, and the superabundant population filled his ranks with some of its bravest soldiers.

On the fall of that great sovereign, the Cholchis suffered considerably from the invasion of the Roman legions, and so complete was the extermination of the inhabitants, and such was the utter humiliation of the country, that it became to Rome a sort of Siberia—a place of exile for its criminals of noble lineage.

From that period, we have no authentic records of these provinces, till the reign of the Georgian queen Thamar, the Catherine of her country, when they were rich, prosperous and populous. But all this was doomed to pass away; and at no other epoch of their history has the de-

vastation been so great as that occasioned by the neighbouring powers, Turkey, Persia and Russia, this district having been for centuries the arena on which most of their quarrels were contested, —at one time nominally belonging to Persia, at another to Turkey, and now swelling the overgrown possessions of Russia. But such has been the ruin of the country and the dispersion of its inhabitants, within the last fifty years, that the whole of these extensive and fertile provinces do not contain, I was informed, at present a population of three hundred thousand.

The Phase, the Khopi, and the Enguri, might be rendered navigable from the sea into the heart of the country at no great expense, if the sand banks, the accumulation of ages, were removed from their mouths on the sea coast; in consequence of this accumulation, in the spring and rainy weather these rivers overflow their banks, inundate the country, and destroy in a few hours the labours of the husbandman. Besides, as the waters lessen in volume they subside into a stagnant marsh, and from the great heat of the

climate poison the atmosphere, thereby rendering the lowlands of these provinces highly detrimental to the health of man. The country, however, is by no means naturally marshy, as the land may be seen in most places shelving down to the Euxine; and wherever a high ridge intervenes, the evil might be easily remedied by cutting a channel: indeed, traces of the foresight of the ancients, in this respect, are in various places still visible, but, like the rivers, their channels are now partly filled up. In short, we find everywhere traces of the grandeur, the wealth, and the industry of its ancient inhabitants, in the remains of towns, roads, and temples for public worship.

The rivers of these provinces, abounding as they do, not only with the finest sturgeon, but with a variety of smaller fish, open sources of immense wealth in their fisheries. During the period when they were subject to the rule of Turkey, and caviare was fashionable at Constantinople, and exported by the merchants of that city to every part of Europe, thousands of indus-

trious fishermen were employed; and so numerous were the sturgeon then taken, particularly at the period of their migration, that myriads were accustomed to be thrown into the rivers after being deprived of the roe and the air-bladders.

At present there is not a single fishing boat to be seen on the rivers, and, according to the account of the natives, the fish now proceed higher up in shoals, when, on arriving in shallow water, they are killed in thousands by the women and children with the blows of staves.

Those among my readers who may be acquainted with the fisheries of the Wolga and the Caspian sea, and the immense revenue they return to the Russian government, must be aware of the profit to be derived from that branch of commerce, which forms the principal means of support to the inhabitants of Astrakan, and of those on the vast steppes on the banks of the Wolga.

Perhaps no part of the world, except Newfoundland, is more productive in its fisheries than the rivers that flow into the Euxine and the

Caspian seas, but more particularly the latter, from which Russia contrives to obtain no inconsiderable profit. This arises principally from the circumstance, that the majority of the inhabitants of her vast empire profess the Greek religion, which imposes so many fasts upon its members that it is not too much to say they amount to more than a third of the year. Hence the demand for fish is so great that, in addition to the thousands of fishermen employed in catching them, thousands are alone occupied in conveying them on rafts and sledges to the different populous towns in the empire. Besides the home consumption, the quantity of caviare and isinglass produced from the sturgeon is immense, and the exportation very great, particularly to England, where the latter article is plentifully used by the brewers; it is also employed throughout Europe for refining wine.

We must deem it a matter of surprise, that countries of such extraordinary fertility as these provinces should be still in a state of nature, when it is in the power of a European sovereign

to colonize them, which there would be no difficulty in effecting from the superabundant population of Germany,—a people who make decidedly the best colonists of any other on the face of the globe, and who have already contributed very considerably to the civilization of the Russian people.

If a few German villages were established here, with their quiet, orderly, industrious inhabitants, how changed would be the face of the country! whereas at present it is a mere desert, in spite of its natural advantages. Among these we must reckon a long line of coast, with the ports of Anakria, Redout-Kalé, and Poti, which afford facilities of commerce with every part of the world, supplying as these provinces do so many valuable natural productions.

In some of the populous parts of these provinces, particularly in Imeritia and the Mingrelian district of Ledschghumi, the natives devote a portion of their attention to breeding silk worms; they do not, however, waste their time in gathering the leaves, but lop off the

branches, which, being young and succulent, remain a long time fresh, and the insects devour them to the very core. This plan answers well in a country where the mulberry produces new shoots twice a year, and saves the trouble of frequently changing the leaves; the stalks also form a kind of wicker-work, so that the insect is rendered more cheerful and cleanly, and soon attains a vigorous state.

The mulberry grows every where wild; the box, as in Circassia, is of prodigious size; while grain of every kind, with rice and maize, flourish in the greatest perfection, together with tobacco; and the land in many parts is admirably adapted for the culture of indigo and cotton.

Imeritia, Mingrelia, and Gourial, together with the province of Achalzeche, formed part of the kingdom of Georgia so late as the beginning of the fifteenth century, when King Alexander bequeathed his states among his three sons. Thus weakened in power, and a prey to civil dissensions, Georgia in a short time became nominally subject to Persia; while Turkey, on the other hand,

subdued Imeritia, Mingrelia, Gourial, and Achalzeche, which provinces remained in her possession till the peace of Kutschuck-Kanardshi in 1774, when they were declared, with the exception of Achalzeche, independent, under the protection of Russia.

The protection of Russia! What an ominous safeguard for the protection of a nation! What a promise does it convey of dismemberment, prostration, and ruin! The Crimea had already been placed under this fostering care, and each of these provinces successively felt the same withering influence which had already paralyzed the independence of Georgia, a kingdom whose integrity Catherine II. had guaranteed to King Iraklia and his heirs for ever, in grateful acknowledgment for past services. Yet, as if in contempt of faith and treaties, the tomb had scarcely closed over her, when we find Paul, by an ukase, incorporating Georgia indissolubly with the Russian empire.

But to resume our account of the other provinces. In accordance with the views and policy

of the court of St. Petersburg, quarrels and dissensions were fomented by its creatures (where are they not?) between the petty kings, Solomon of Imeritia, and Kazia of Mingrelia, till the protector deemed it expedient to interpose in his character of mediator, and terminate the dispute by annexing the turbulent provinces to the empire of the Czars.

The feudal system, however, still exists, the princes acknowledging the emperor as their sovereign, but to whom they are not answerable for any action committed in their own territories, except such as involve a question of life and death. The principal chiefs and elders form a council, without whose consent the prince cannot undertake any important enterprise. So far the inhabitants possess greater privileges than those of Georgia and the Crimea. They are not obliged to find subsistence for the Russian troops when in the country, nor to supply horses for transporting the baggage and military stores, without some remuneration; nor are they compelled to procure a passport from the authorities whenever they

may find it necessary to leave home. Neither are they under the control of those authorities, consisting generally of men at once corrupt and ignorant, and who, receiving no adequate salary for the performance of their duties, and being at the same time greedy for money, never scruple to avail themselves of their power to increase their wealth.

CHAPTER VI.

Continuation of my journey through Mingrelia and Gourial —Character of the inhabitants—Arrival in Turkish Lazestahn—News of the plague—Inhospitable reception—Fracas with an agha—Causes of our unfriendly reception—Miserable aspect of Lazestahn and its inhabitants —Characteristics of the Lazi.

We crossed the serpentine Phase two or three times on our route to Poti, where we entertained some expectation of finding a vessel to take us to the Turkish coast; but that little town being now completely Russian, whose employées we might encounter, the attempt was somewhat hazardous, particularly as vessels cannot approach nearer than within two wersts of the shore.

It is true, my companions were abundantly gifted with all the artifice and cunning necessary to form good guerillas, and to elude even

Russian vigilance,—veterans in predatory incursions. Still it was impossible not to feel somewhat uneasy as to the termination of our tour. Nothing could have been easier than for our Armenian to play us false if he were inclined to lead us into a snare, for, although the mountaineers frequently travel to, and return from, Turkey by this route, none of our party were any better acquainted with the country than myself. The consequences to them, if we had fallen into the hands of the Russians, might have been dangerous; imprisonment was the mildest treatment they would have to expect, and an order for them to be instantly shot as rebels was highly probable. For myself, I entertained no such apprehensions, as I was acquainted with the governor of these provinces; besides, when I left Odessa, I made no secret to my Russian friends there of my intention to explore the Caucasus, and I knew their powerful influence would be exerted to extricate me from my difficulty, independently of that of our own consul, as they universally regarded my visit to Circassia as a sort of hair-brained enterprise, entirely unconnected with any political

motive, and bets were actually made that I should be detained as a slave, if I attempted it.

Notwithstanding the various introductions I was furnished with to the chiefs of the confederated tribes from their friends at Constantinople, I had some slight apprehension of being detained. I accordingly intimated my intention to our consul-general, Mr. Yeames, and to Mr. Martigny, the Dutch consul; in addition to which I wrote to my friends in England, apprizing them of my intended excursion, and requesting them, should I be more than six months absent without them hearing from me, to make inquiries of these gentlemen, whom I knew would immediately set on foot an inquiry.

Subsequent events, however, proved these precautions to have been unnecessary. I found nothing but truth and honesty among the natives of the Caucasus, and while in company with my present party I did not experience either interruption or annoyance; on the contrary, we were every where received by the inhabitants with the greatest hospitality and kindness. Still we could not avoid feeling some uneasiness so long as we

remained within reach of the talons of the Russian eagle; and no criminal who had escaped from the hands of justice ever felt more satisfaction than we did when, after crossing the insignificant stream, the Tschorak, we found ourselves within the Turkish frontier.

Perhaps there are no people whose character and conduct have been more traduced and misrepresented than the inhabitants of the Asiatic coast of the Euxine. They have been described as savages, banditti, and pirates, whereas I doubt if any country contains a more estimable population, when we consider their total ignorance of the laws, institutions, and habits of the European nations, and the little progress they have made in civilization and intelligence.

In proof of this we shall find, on inquiring at Lloyd's, that they have on every occasion exerted themselves in the most praiseworthy manner to save vessels that have had the misfortune to be wrecked, or driven by violent winds, on the coast. Their honesty in returning every article from the wreck to its rightful owner, and their humanity

to the poor mariner, to whom they have uniformly rendered every kind office, cannot be too highly eulogized. The Turks, Greeks, Italians, and other trading people, can also testify to this fact. We must, however, make one exception, for should a Russian vessel fall into the hands of the mountaineers of the Caucasus, they consider it, and with justice, a lawful prize; while, on the contrary, the very name of an Englishman carries with it a charm that wins at once not only the sympathy of these people, but that of the natives of the ancient Cholchis and Turkey.

Can we extend the same commendation to our own people? Is it not the barbarous practice in some of our remote provinces, when a vessel is wrecked, for the greedy natives to appropriate whatever part of the cargo may have been driven on their coast; justifying themselves by the foolish plea, that it had been the usage of their forefathers?

The Gourials, who inhabit the coast of the Euxine, between the Phase and the Tschorak, are somewhat more uncourteous in their manners, and savage in their appearance, than their neighbours

the Mingrelians, or the Circassians; but even these are not guilty of preying on the helpless shipwrecked mariner. Although it is said they will not scruple to relieve a traveller of the trouble of carrying his baggage.

Having thus finished my observations on the ancient Cholchis and its inhabitants, we will resume our narrative.

At the first Turkish village we reached in Lazestahn, after crossing the Tschorak, we received the disheartening intelligence, from a party of Armenian merchants, that the plague was raging at Constantinople and in several districts of Asia Minor, and causing a most fearful mortality. This explained the cause of the extra Cossack-guard that lined the Russian frontier, whose vigilance we had some little difficulty in eluding; for although these provinces are not usually strictly guarded; during war or the prevalence of the plague the cordon is certain to be doubled. However, at all times, an undisciplined horde of drunken Cossacks is a very inefficient guard for a frontier; and, if we are to credit the accounts of the natives and travelling merchants, they are

for the most part notorious pilferers, and always ready to risk the public health, which they are placed to watch over, for the sake of a bribe.

Owing to the dread of the pestilence, the natives manifested the strongest reluctance to receive us into their houses; consequently we stood a fair chance of being obliged to encamp in the open fields, although I was furnished with a firman from the Sultan, commanding every employée in his dominions, from the highest pasha to the lowest agha, to furnish me with guides, horses, provisions, and whatever else was necessary to ensure my safety during my excursions through his states.

The mandate was, however, disregarded by some on the plea of poverty, and by others on that of their total ignorance of its contents; and, to increase our annoyance, the weather, which had been hitherto tolerably favourable, changed to the most incessant rain. I cared not for any of the luxuries of civilized life, having become, in a manner, inured to privations. I could sleep as comfortably upon a bed of straw as upon one of down, and fare as sumptuously upon a mess of

pottage as an alderman upon a bowl of turtle; but no constitution, however robust, could be proof against the debilitating effects of rain in these countries, for the moist and heated atmosphere becomes so charged with miasma as to be certain of engendering an epidemic. We were therefore very anxious to obtain shelter.

After vainly endeavouring to obtain a night's quarters for ourselves and our horses at some of the miserable sheds belonging to the peasants, we at once proceeded into the court-yard of the best looking house in the village, and which happened to be that of the agha, making our way through an assembly of barking curs, camels, mules, and asses. That worthy chief surveyed us with no small portion of curiosity and surprise; but when we deliberately put up our horses in his stable, supplied them with provender, and then entered his house, his astonishment gave way to indignation, and he vented his rage in a torrent of abuse, in which he was joined by the whole of the women of his household.

I have always observed, among half-civilized nations, that gentleness was either received as

the homage of an inferior, or the simplicity of a fool, and in order to be respected it was necessary to be haughty with the great, and to assume the character of a hector with the lower orders; in accordance with this maxim, I lectured our agha on the want of courtesy and hospitality displayed by him and his people, and then unfolded my firman. Both were at first equally disregarded; however, after a few minutes' conversation with his helpmates, he reluctantly consented to our occupying an outhouse, at the same time informing us that we must sup on air, as there was neither maize, eggs, butter, nor even milk,—the great drought of summer having produced a famine. I offered to pay handsomely for our accommodation; but even a well-filled purse, which in Europe unlocks every larder and cellar, was here treated with contempt.

Neither my companions nor myself—fine sturdy fellows, well armed, and who could have put to flight the whole of the inhabitants of the village in case of being ill-treated—admiring the prospect of going to our couch supperless, we determined to seek for something in the shape of eggs or

poultry in the farm-yard; but everything had disappeared, with the exception of a few barking dogs, and pussy, who lay quietly sleeping with her little family in a corner of the barn. Knowing the partiality of the Turks for Mahomet's purring favourite, the young Barrakai chief seized poor tabby by the neck, declaring to the agha that, rather than fast, he would roast her for our supper.

The prospect of darling pussy, who had so often slept in his bosom, falling by the poniard of a fierce barbarian, proved sufficient to open the storehouse, and we were soon supplied with an excellent supper; our host also, making a virtue of necessity, became more courteous and communicative, and in a very short time good humour and harmony were completely established among all parties.

We related our adventures in the Caucasus, the defeat of the *fana Muscov*, together with various other interesting details of the war, which soon spread over the village, and had the effect of filling the house with curious groups of listeners, who heard our accounts with the ut-

most satisfaction, and evinced the greatest enthusiasm in favour of the gallant mountaineers; so that the very people who, only half an hour previous, refused us shelter from the storm, were now vehement in their proffers of service.

At a late hour, our worthy agha had the best divans in the house prepared for us; and the next morning, in addition to refusing any remuneration whatever for the accommodation he had so liberally afforded us, ordered his women to fill our bags with an ample supply of hot barley-cakes, hard eggs, and other provisions, for our journey.

We found, on inquiry of our host, that the hostility evinced towards us by the villagers did not so much originate in their fear of the plague as from the circumstance of their having heard some vague accounts of the war in the Caucasus, and, in their simplicity, imagined that the mountaineers had invaded the neighbouring Russian provinces, and that we were a few stragglers on a predatory excursion. This suspicion was excited in consequence of our having changed the Mingrelian cap for the Circassian on entering

the Turkish dominions, which was done merely with a view of winning the sympathy of the Ottomans, who are known to be everywhere favourable to the cause of the Caucasians.

It is difficult to say whether the inhabitants of this part of Turkish Lazestahn are more slothful and careless in their habits than they are poor and miserable in their appearance: both men and women frequently go barefoot, and at best their shoes are only made from the bark of the linden tree, or an untanned hide; while the principal part of their clothing consists of sheep-skins, which articles of dress are also in general use among the Mingrelians and Gourials.

The country is quite as fertile as the Russian provinces I have just described, but, if possible, even more neglected and less populous. In short, the whole land is nearly in a state of nature; sometimes we saw a herd of buffaloes or horses, guarded by most primitive-looking herdsmen, grazing in their plentiful pastures—the latter appeared perfectly wild, for they snorted and galloped off on perceiving us, as if they had seen a lion.

The huts of the natives, made of wood, and covered with Indian corn leaves, or sedges, were most abominably dirty; they were generally so constructed as to have two doors, one opposite the other, but without either chimney or window, with the exception of a hole in the side, the smoke having no other vent than through that picturesque aperture and the cracks in the thatch of the roof; consequently, on entering one of these cabins, the mingled odour arising from the smoke and the filthy manner in which these people live—is perfectly insufferable. I confess I always preferred encamping in the woods to taking up my abode in one of these infectious dens, surrounded by squalling children and their half-savage parents, to say nothing of the danger of being eaten by rats and every description of vermin. The Turks, their masters, who are certainly by no means fastidious in their notions of cleanliness, infinitely surpass them in the neatness and comfort of their dwellings.

The greater number of these people are rayahs, and profess the Greek religion; but their ideas of Christianity must be very vague, as they have

few or no priests residing among them. In their habits, customs, and manners, they resemble the Mingrelians and the inhabitants of the other Russian provinces, who claim the same Laze extraction.

They are generally below rather than above the middle size, but remarkably well made and muscular,—precisely the sort of men to make capital light-infantry, and to endure great fatigue. Their features are expressive, and, like those of the Greeks, denote the presence of no inconsiderable portion of cunning.

The eyes of the Laze race are for the most part blue, and the aquiline nose prevails more than any other; and I could not help observing, notwithstanding their bronzed complexion, the fine texture of the skin, and the absence of hair on the cheek,—thick, bushy whiskers, such as we see in Europe, are with them a rarity, immense warlike mustachios being obliged to serve as a substitute. Those advanced in age wear, like the Tartars, long beards; and the custom of shaving the head is universal here among the men, and also throughout the other provinces in

this part of Asia: this is not done with the view of keeping the head cool, for they either wear thick turbans or lamb-skin caps.

The women differ neither in manners nor dress from the other provinces in the ancient Cholchis, —are equally industrious, and may be termed rather good-looking than otherwise.

I must not forget to mention that among the visitors to our host, the agha, was a very extraordinary character; he had been one of the chiefs of the Janissaries, but through the interference of powerful friends escaped the general slaughter. Having subsequently made his peace with the Sultan, he was sent to Vienna on a private mission, which having executed with ability, he was, on his return, made a Binbashi; but, although shrewd, clever, and intelligent, through the influence of a secret intrigue, suspicions of his fidelity were excited, and he was deprived of his military rank and honours, and banished for life to Lazestahn.

He represented the state of the remote Turkish provinces as deplorable; and as his accounts coincided with my own observations, and with the

details given me by several respectable Franks residing in the metropolis and the great trading towns, the reader will find them in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

Observations upon the present state of the Turkish Empire.

THE whole of Europe resounds with the amelioration and reforms of Sultan Mahmoud, the era of civilization commenced in Turkey, the immense advantages derived from the European system of discipline introduced into his armies since the destruction of the Janissaries and the rebel pachas; but all these will not avail to arrest the decline of the Ottoman empire, which is approaching nearer and nearer to its dissolution. A combination of some of the great European powers, for political considerations, might for a time prop up the falling fabric; but no man who has wandered through the remote provinces of the Turkish empire in Asia, who has seen the

miserable soldiers, the disorganization in every part of the administration, can be ignorant that the fate of the Turks as a nation is, judging from the present aspect of affairs, irrevocably fixed; even the exertions of such a man as Peter of Russia would not prevent the catastrophe. The Turks have fallen too far behind the inhabitants of Europe to be able to regain the station they have lost by centuries of misrule and anarchy.

Almost every act of the Sultan, however well-intentioned, has produced discontent and turbulence among the people,—effects peculiarly visible in this part of Asia. His taxes on land have generated poverty, and too often famine; for, being disproportionate to its resources, they have exhausted the cultivator, who, kept in a continual fever of apprehension that his hard-earned gains will be wrung from him by the hand of extortion, forsakes the industrious habits which have so long enabled him to contribute his quota to the expenses of the government, sinks into apathy, and starves.

The abolition of the feudal system—a measure that would be hailed with joy, a boon that would

be received with gratitude, by a civilized population—is here regarded as a grievance of the first magnitude. The tie which bound the serf to his feudal lord from time immemorial, to whom he was attached from the remembrance of kind offices and long habit, has been suddenly and arbitrarily broken; the parental authority of the patriarchal chief has been delegated to mercenary military governors, who rule with an iron hand, and drain the country of its resources by the most rapacious exactions.

The chiefs that formerly furnished, in time of war, thousands of the finest light cavalry, whose daring bravery so often carried destruction into the ranks of the enemy, are now without power or influence; while the spirit of a people, once accustomed to fly to arms on the mere rumour of an invasion, and who would have followed their feudal lords to the very cannon's mouth, is for ever broken. Indeed, so debased has the entire population become, so utterly ruined are these provinces, that, even if they were placed immediately under the dominion of any Christian power, however active and intelligent, centuries must elapse

before they could rank even with any one of the most debased and ill-governed states in Europe; to which we may add, that the spirit of Islamism is entirely opposed to the progress of any species of civilization emanating or practised by the professors of Christianity. Hence nearly every reform introduced by the Sultan, which would have succeeded in the most degraded Christian state, is totally inapplicable to the hordes of Asia.

Such is the fatality which attends the Ottoman empire, that its rulers appear determined to accelerate their own destruction; for throughout the whole of Asiatic Turkey, particularly along this frontier, there is not even a force maintained capable of arresting the progress of a few thousand Russians, if they chose at any time to take possession. The conscription, it is true, arbitrarily enforced, furnishes men, who carry a musquet à la Européenne, but there is no chief to animate them, no spirit of patriotism to cheer them on to conquest; they are, in fact, a miserable army, in their physical qualities, discipline, and appointments, from the simple soldier to the commander-in-chief; the majority are mere boys, or half-

grown men, with humiliation and discontent expressed in their countenances; hence we are at a loss to know what has become of that splendid race of men who, with fierce pride stamped on their manly features, so often carried fire and sword into the heart of Christendom. It would seem as if the flower of the Turkish race expired with the Janissaries.

This far-famed corps, however turbulent and overawing to the reigning sultan, often saved the empire; whereas the modern substitute, the tacticoes, are at present, whatever they may become, altogether inefficient. In every grade, whether the most elevated or the most inferior, we see neither capacity nor activity, the superior officers, conscious of their own unfitness, are timid and fearful of resorting to the severity necessary for the enforcement of discipline,—for in Turkey, properly speaking, there is no educated class, the son of a cobbler being, in his attainments, equal to the son of a prince. The uncertain tenure of their command also operates unfavourably: the man promoted to-day is often superseded by the favourite of to-morrow, and too frequently for no

other reason than the caprice of the sovereign, or some miserable intrigue.

This evil might, in some degree, be remedied if the Sultan were permitted to officer his army with Europeans; but this salutary measure is rendered impracticable by the religious prejudices of the people. In this emergency what expedient has been adopted? Foreign instructors have been procured for the troops, who take no military rank; consequently we see the safety of the nation, the organization of the army, confided to men for the most part ignorant and destitute of talent,—many of whom are revolutionary exiles, without home or country, or any stake whatever in the success of the cause in which they are engaged, except the pittance they receive as their daily pay. As Christians, they are despised and incapacitated for command; and if they become renegades, the evil is increased, as they incur universal contempt, and are never after deemed worthy of confidence. What man, therefore, conscious of his ability and acquirements, would occupy such a position, would submit to be a slave, to be the object of ridicule, even to the very men he was instructing?

Peter of Russia wisely pursued a different plan, and owed the rapid rise of his empire entirely to the employment of foreign officers. Mehemet Ali has adopted the same system; witness the rapid improvement of his troops, and the superiority of his navy, which have elevated him to a power dreaded by his own sovereign, whom he could at any time hurl from his throne.

The only effect hitherto produced by the introduction of European tactics into the armies of the Sultan has been to increase the lethargy of his people, to soften their manners, and to convert the fiery warriors of other days into passive slaves, —to estrange their love and respect from a sovereign who, they say, imitates the Christian and imposes upon them the manners and usages of infidels, whom they are taught by the Koran to abhor.

In fact, the position of the Sultan is in many respects critical; insurmountable obstacles oppose themselves to his plans of regeneration and reform; there is no nationality among his people, composed as they are of so many races, differing in their religion, customs, and language. A rayah

regards the Turk as his hereditary tyrant, and the Osmanli, on his part, considers the disciple of Christ to be an inferior being, given to him by conquest and the will of the prophet, as a perpetual slave.

Nor can the Sultan calculate with more confidence upon the unanimity even of those among his subjects who profess the Mahometan faith; for instance, the Arabs have recently begun to comprehend their own strength, and to despise their effeminate masters, nor will they fail eventually to emancipate themselves from the bondage of foreigners; and as they are a clever energetic people, endowed with a national aptitude for acquiring knowledge, we may predict their success with confidence. We have already an example of the good effects which may accrue to a people from the virtual renunciation of the yoke of the Ottoman Porte in Mehemet Ali. His government, his well-organized troops, his navy, his system of police, the confidence he has established, all promise the renovation of Egypt, and the civilization of the wandering hordes of the desert. But that reformer was favoured by circumstances: the people

over whom he was called to reign possessed every element capable of improvement; robust, enthusiastic lovers of their country, obedient to their chiefs, industrious, and uncorrupted by luxury, futurity may see them attain a high point of prosperity and civilization.

What a contrast to this is the picture of unhappy Turkey! Here we see a population of about four millions, of the pure race of Othman, spread over an immense empire, intermingled with Arabs and Christians by far more numerous, whose submission is precarious, and who cannot be actuated by any other sentiment towards their rulers than discontent and hatred. We already find the Arabs making common cause with Mehemet Ali, and it is not too much to say that the whole of the rayah population would to a man join the standard of any Christian invader, whether Russian or any other, to-morrow. These, if not a powerful, are at least a very numerous class, and surpass every other in industry and intelligence. Indeed, the Christian population of the Porte were formerly the sources from whence the government derived, or rather extorted, the principal supplies necessary

for the purposes of the state; but this system of rapacity having been persisted in for years, thousands, and tens of thousands of those who were enabled to effect the transfer of their property to another country have emigrated to South Russia, where their industry and wealth tend to support and strengthen the resources of the most persevering enemy of Turkey.

Such being the treatment to which they are exposed, can we feel surprised that those of the rayah population who remain regard invasion as a blessing, and look forward to any change that promises to deliver them from the tyranny of a besotted government, even if their new rulers should differ from them in manners, language, and religion,—for when did patriotism exist among a nation of slaves, and what man can feel an interest in the prosperity of a land where he is regarded as a slave?

There is scarcely a Turk who does not lead a life of indolence, while every avocation demanding intellect is followed by the Christian stranger, and every trade requiring physical strength is pursued by the rayah. The grandees of the em-

pire have, for the most part, risen to honours and military rank from the lowest stations, even from that of slave; hence they are sent to administer the duties of a pachalic, or to command an army, with no other qualification than an acquaintance with the Koran, and perhaps a knowledge of reading and writing.

When we consider all the difficulties by which it is environed, we feel surprised that the government is able to support itself against them, especially when we remember that the people are destitute either of commerce, agriculture, or manufactures. Even in her best days, the revenues of Turkey consisted principally of the plunder of conquered nations, and that extorted from her own subjects; but these sources are now closed against her,—she is too weak for conquest, and the poverty of her people precludes the possibility of her attempting to wring even the merest pittance from the majority of them. She has no longer Greece to resort to, and Egypt is equally lost; perhaps of all other events the erection of Greece into an independent kingdom, and the revolt of Mehemet Ali in Egypt, have been the

most fatal to the revenue and the power of the Sultan. Even the large estates set apart by the devotion of former rulers for the maintenance of the Turkish priests, and for repairing the mosques, have become wholly inadequate for these purposes; so that wretchedness and decay are pictured in every part of the country, whether we wander on the banks of the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, or through the interior of Asia. Where, then, is the Sultan to obtain the sinews of war, should his empire be invaded, unless from foreign powers? for armies cannot be organized, much less march to conquest, without the necessary supplies.

Of the little influence which fanaticism exercises over the modern Turk we have an instance: when the Russians were in possession of Adrianople, and menaced the capital, the Sultan himself unfurled the sacred banner, with great solemnity; but the people, with few exceptions, remained passive spectators of the contest,—bad laws, a bad government, and a political religion, having produced their natural result—national apathy.

However much the Osmanli of former days might have been stimulated to deeds of valour by fanatic zeal, he now feels but little sympathy either with the cause of Mahometanism or with that of a sovereign, whom he regards, in consequence of his European reforms, more as a giaour than a true believer. At the very plenitude of Mahometan power, the undisciplined hordes of Turkey marching under the sacred standard, notwithstanding their bravery, were a positive curse to their own country, being accustomed to plunder the industrious, and to ravage the land over which they passed as completely as a flight of locusts. How, then, can Mahmoud, with all his energy, all his reforms, regenerate his country, oppose a barrier to Russian ambition, or procrastinate the fall of his empire, crippled as he is by an uncertain revenue, a bad commissariat, a corrupt magistracy, rapacious governors, inefficient ministers, a debased people, a fanatic priesthood, and an army below mediocrity in its appointments and discipline?

Apart from every other cause of national decay, the fanaticism of the people, their exclusiveness,

and determined ignorance of European arts and knowledge, will ultimately work their overthrow; the advanced intelligence of the age will drive them into the remote regions of Asia, from whence they originally came, unless some extraordinary event should occur, beyond the foresight of man to calculate. Then will be fulfilled the prophecy so familiar to every Turk, that the day is not far distant when the red banner of Christ will again wave over the city of Constantine,—and we know the effect such a belief must operate upon the minds of the most superstitious people perhaps existing.

If such a result should ensue, what Christian, what philosophical mind, could feel a sympathy with the fall of Islamism, with a religious code which bars its followers from all improvement, or intercourse with Christians—a code which has been the bane, we may say the ruin, of all the fair countries over which its followers have extended their rule? Indeed, if it were possible that any of the petty Christian powers of Europe could succeed to the sceptre of Mahometan dominion, instead of the colossus of the north, already too

powerful for the repose of the world, how gladly should we hail an event so fraught with blessing to the benighted children of Asia. We should then see the light of civilization dawn over the fairest portion of our hemisphere, new channels opened for commerce, the causes of the plague examined into and eradicated, and a general amelioration introduced in the institutions, manners and morals of the people.

That Russia will be that Christian power, no man who has wandered upon the banks of the Neva and the Bosphorus can doubt. A perusal, however slight, of the history of both people, during the last half century, will confirm the probability almost to a certainty. In situations the most critical, Russia has been singularly favoured by fortune: we see her armies at one time starving for the want of provisions, at another dying by thousands of pestilence, and again completely surrounded by the enemy, so that it only required a little courage and decision on the part of the Turks to annihilate them. From these, and many other dilemmas, Russia has extricated herself triumphantly. Add to this a con-

tinuation of successes has given strength and courage to the one to go on conquering and to conquer, while on the other hand reverse upon reverse has, we may say, for ever broken down the spirit of the other. But this is not all; it would appear as if the leading powers of Europe were leagued in opposition to their best interests, to facilitate the downfall of the Turkish sultan, and to place the czar of Muscovy on his throne. Even the subserviency of the Sultan himself, in opposition to the wishes of his best friends, to the will of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, and his unlimited confidence in the disinterested friendship of his new ally the czar, contributes in no inconsiderable degree to hasten the dissolution of his empire.

Not only have events concurred in the most remarkable manner to facilitate Russia in her meditated conquest of Constantinople, but the very current of the Bosphorus, and the prevalence of north winds from her own ports on the Euxine, are her allies. Should she at any time decide upon taking possession, she can equip a squadron of twelve or more sail of the line in a few days, at

Sevastopol, one of the finest marine stations in the world, and send an army across the Balkan and take Adrianople, all of which may be done, whenever it may suit her views, before a courier would have time to reach Vienna; so utterly unprotected and helpless is the Turkish empire at the present moment. If we only consider the situation of Constantinople, the strength of the Thracian Bosphorus and the Dardanelles which command the Euxine and the Mediterranean, and are in fact the keys to the whole of her commerce in these seas, we must admit it to be the natural policy of the Russian government either to take absolute possession, or hold the monarch that rules over them as its vassal.

Such, then, being the policy of Russia, can we wonder that she has at length acquired full ascendancy over the Turkish Sultan, and rules in his councils, nay, even holds him in bondage to her will,—a bondage which Great Britain, with all her influence, power, and protestations of friendship, cannot break,—for however cordially the Turk may detest the Russian, and feel favourably disposed towards the English nation, the Sultan

was obliged, by circumstances over which he had no control, to implore the protection of his hereditary foe in the hour of peril, when deserted by the great powers of Europe, his throne and life menaced on the one side by an infuriated people, and on the other by the invasion of Mehemet Ali.

Since that event, the councils of England have ceased to influence the divan, so ingeniously woven is the net of Russian intrigue in which the too confiding Sultan is enveloped; and it is only one of those sudden revolutionary bursts so peculiar to the Turkish people, the invasion of Mehemet Ali, or some such great political change in the administration, that can possibly emancipate Turkey from the bondage of Russia,—an emancipation that power will endeavour to prevent, and for which her situation and proximity to the Turkish empire afford her such easy means of effecting.

However much Russia may have been guided by views to the advancement of her own interest, we cannot too much admire the prompt energetic support she afforded the feeble monarch of Turkey in the hour of danger, nor the line of policy that

guided her councils,—an intervention which at once restored peace to a distracted country, won the entire confidence of the Sultan, and stilled the fears of Europe as to her real intentions. How different from the policy adopted by the timid administration of our own country! We see our allies, Spain and Portugal, still torn by intestine convulsions,—the young queen, Isabel, whom it was our duty and interest to protect, left a prey to the cabals of the despotic powers of Europe; whereas, if in the first instance a few thousand effective troops had been sent to the Peninsula, Spain might have been now flourishing and happy. Half-measures never converted an enemy into a friend, but they have changed many a friend into an enemy.

These measures Russia never permits to sway her councils; she proposes to herself an object, and advances steadily and securely to its attainment,—it may be, through a long series of years. When the impotent monarch of Turkey implored her aid, she sent him the most effectual assistance, and certainly without drawing upon his exhausted treasury for a single para. No sooner was tran-

quillity and order restored, which the mere presence of the Russian army effected, without striking a blow, and the Sultan fixed securely on his tottering throne, than the foreign troops evacuated the Turkish soil.

Enough, however, had been done to advance the interests of the cabinet of St. Petersburg: while the Sultan applauded the magnanimous conduct of his ancient foe, he only riveted more firmly his own chains, for he soon discovered that he had become nothing more than a satrap, dependent upon the will of a protector, whose commands must be obeyed. At the same time, the Turks are becoming more and more accustomed to the presence of the *fana Muscov*,—not that this has yet softened their dislike to a people who, above every other, have contributed to their degradation as a nation.

This hatred, however, will not avail to arrest the slow but certain march of Russian policy, for when a convenient season has arrived, that wily power will quietly pluck the fruit she has been so long maturing, and take possession of Constantinople. No sanguinary contest will precede the

event on her part; but domestic dissensions, internal feuds, revolution upon revolution, having reduced the Ottoman empire to the lowest state of anarchy, she will interfere for the sake of *humanity*, and, in accordance with her character as *protector*, to give peace to a distracted people. A protocol will then be despatched to the great powers of Europe, announcing what has taken place, and representing her line of policy as the result of inevitable necessity. Like a clever politician, she will no doubt wait for some combinations of external circumstances favourable to the enterprise. It will not be when the whole of Europe is at peace, watching her every movement, but when some great political hurricane shall engross the attention of those powers whose interest it is to prevent the execution of her plans. The war in Circassia is at present an insurmountable obstacle to the consummation of her wishes. So long as the gallant mountaineers maintain their freedom, Turkey may continue to preserve a nominal independence, but whenever the Caucasus becomes a Russian province, we shall see the fate of the Turkish nation for ever sealed.

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Every thing considered, we may regard the event of Constantinople becoming the seat of Muscovite dominion, as one that will certainly fill a page in future history, and Russian intervention in the affairs of Turkey as the first step towards its accomplishment!

Without entering into a disquisition on the difficulties attending a combination of the great powers of Europe to prevent the occupation of Constantinople, and the adjoining provinces of Asia Minor, &c., by Russia, it may be advisable to point out to some of my readers, who may not be well acquainted with the localities of these countries, the facilities she possesses for invasion. Some of these have been already instanced, and we may mention in addition, that the city of the Sultan is only a hundred and eighty miles distant from Sevastopol; that she is the undisputed mistress of the Euxine and the Lower Danube, and that the whole of the rayah population of Bulgaria are allied to her by the ties of religion, and regard her as the head of their church—their natural protector. The Balkan is no longer a dangerous pass, for where are the sturdy mountaineers to

oppose her march; and when she has once the straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles in her possession, forts impregnable both by sea and land will be erected!

Several politicians doubt whether Russia would be benefited at the present moment by the extension of her already overgrown empire; the seat of government, they say, would in all probability be transferred from the cold insalubrious Neva to the lovely banks of the Bosphorus, and every man who has studied the history of nations must be aware how disastrous a change in its metropolis has frequently proved to a country. Her own vast steppes, they add, in the interior of the empire and in Krim-Tartary, would then be deserted for the fertile fields of Asia Minor; Odessa, and the other ports on the Black Sea, would be completely ruined; while the empire, being made up of so many different provinces, with jarring interests, in all probability, would become a prey to anarchy. Poland would undoubtedly give vent to the hatred that only slumbers. The northern nations would remember the loss of their wrested provinces; while it could

not be expected that England, France, and Austria would continue to maintain the indifference that has of late years guided their councils.

In following the same line of argument, they say, even should Russia pursue another plan, and erect Turkey into an independent monarchy, to be governed by a prince of the house of the czar, which was the plan proposed by the empress Catherine, and recommended by the late emperor Alexander, the effects could not but be dangerous to the Russian empire; for however much he might be biased in favour of the land which gave him birth, still he would be obliged to consult the wishes of his people, and be compelled to sacrifice his family alliance.

These are but a few of the arguments which have been adduced from time to time to shew that Russia would not reap any substantial benefit from the accession of Turkey to her empire. We must, however, admit that at present the question is merely speculative; but, apart from theory, every man must be aware that the occupation of the metropolis of the last of the Constantines by Russia would certainly, at least for

a time, be fatal to the liberties of Europe, dangerous to its peace, and highly injurious to the best interests of Great Britain.

As philanthropists, we must regret the decay of English influence at Constantinople, as it is impossible to deny that the time has arrived when the crescent shall wane beneath the cross. Even divested of national partiality, no man who has compared the institutions of England, religious as well as civil, with those of Russia, but must deplore that it is not through their gradual establishment in the Ottoman empire that the regeneration of the Turkish character is to be wrought.

CHAPTER VIII.

Journey to the coast—Wandering Turkomans—A bivouac with them—Their hospitality—Their characteristics—Arrival at Khoppa—A Turkish Khan—A surprise in the night—Departure for Trebizond—Arrival there—Alarming accounts of the plague—Hospitable reception by a Turkish Binbashi—His manner of living—Departure in the Crescent steamer for Constantinople—Description of the coast.

After this long digression upon the present state of the Turkish empire, we will now resume our journey to Khoppa, a little Turkish bay, or rather roadstead, on the coast of Lazestahn. The rain still poured in torrents, which gave me an opportunity of proving, to its full extent, the water-proof qualities of my Circassian tchaouka, as its ample folds completely protected me from the effects of the weather; and however coarse

the manufacture may be, it is for this purpose more serviceable than any other article of clothing ever invented by the ingenuity of man.

I much regretted the cloudy atmosphere did not permit me to enjoy my ride through this part of Lazestahn, as the prospects in fine weather must be delightful, embracing as they do the Caucasian alps and the Adgi-dah, a range of mountains in the far distance; even as it was, we occasionally obtained a glimpse when the wind drifted away the thick vapours in which they were enveloped.

After the storm had passed away, we encountered a cavalcade of Turkoman nomades. Herds of fine cattle, driven by young men on horseback, with lances in their hands, formed the van of their pastoral procession; the patriarchs followed, also well mounted, — venerable-looking men, with long flowing beards and bronzed complexions; last of all came the women, astride on the backs of camels, mules, and donkies, with paniers filled with provisions, felt tents, and cooking utensils, as quietly as if they had been lounging upon the cushions of a divan, although

the greater number had children on their laps; while the rear of the procession was brought up by flocks of sheep and goats, tended by fine curley-headed boys, dressed in sheep-skin jackets and high fur caps.

The youths in front, on perceiving us, seemed to hold a council of war, and then, in a playful manner, couched their spears, and made a desperate charge; but on approaching us, they changed the warlike salutation to a hearty welcome,—shouting, "Khoche, keldime tcherkess!" (Circassians, you are welcome!) They were exceedingly good-natured, pressed upon our acceptance a quantity of fine barley meal, and replenished our leathern bottles with *yaourt*. The women were by no means handsome, even the very youngest, for they made no scruple to shew their faces; their cheek-bones were high, and the features altogether hard-favoured, and only redeemed from being absolutely ugly by the large gazelle-like eye, with long lashes, and a profusion of the finest dark tresses. The men, on the contrary, were well grown, bold, daring looking fellows, and recalled to my recollection the Karatchai Tartars

in the Caucasus, whom they very much resemble in form and feature.

We stopped for the night with another division of the same tribe, to whom we were recommended, and who had taken up their quarters in a very pretty situation at the foot of a range of small hills, or rather eminences covered with wood. How much more cleanly, healthy, and comfortable, was it to encamp under the canopy of heaven—the air perfumed by the fragrance of the wild herbs and flowers of the field—than to pass the night in the dirty, miserable, smoky cabins to which we had been accustomed since we left the cleanly inhabitants of the Caucasus!

We were welcomed to the tent of an elder, who, with two fine boys, occupied that in front, while the one behind was appropriated to the use of the women, who, as soon as the first salutation with our host was over, and we had broken bread, entered, and having placed the carpets, spread before us a plentiful repast, consisting of barley cakes, fresh milk, butter, and an excellent pillaff.

The feminine portion of our host's household

were tolerably fair, considering their nomadic life; and but for the high cheek-bones, universal among this people, would have been handsome. If nature, however, had denied them beauty of feature, she had given them that of form, as they might have served as models of perfection for a sculptor, and which were certainly not disguised by any superfluity of clothing, chemises and trowsers, braided with various colours, being their only attire; though we must not forget a profusion of fine sable hair, which curled over their shoulders down to the girdle.

After smoking a tchibouque with our host and his family, we retired to rest; but not being accustomed to sleep with four-footed companions, I was repeatedly disturbed during the night by a few pet lambs that skipped about as playfully over us as if they had been in an open field.

At break of day there was an end of slumber; the whole party dispersed, the men to look after their flocks and herds, the women to milk the cows, churn, and bake barley cakes, while we prepared to depart; but no,—our host would not allow it till we had breakfasted; which having

done, we bade adieu to our kind entertainer and his household, and recommenced our journey.

During the remainder of our ride to Khoppa, we did not encounter a single human being, except a few miserable-looking peasants, the whole country exhibiting a perfect picture of desolation. On arriving there, we took up our quarters at the khan of the town, or rather village, which contained a numerous party of travellers, made up of pedlers, wandering priests, and dervishes; and having made our evening meal, spread our carpets for the night. But fate had not destined that we should sleep quietly, for about one o'clock in the morning we were aroused by a cry that the house was on fire. The whole of the inmates were instantly on their feet, loaded with their various packages,—a motley group, for, be it remembered, the inhabitants of these countries always sleep in their clothes.

A few buckets of water, however, soon extinguished the fire, the author of the confusion being the only sufferer. He was a heavy-looking Karaite Jew, who had fallen asleep with his tchibouque red hot, which he happened to place in contact with his saddle-bags, full of cotton wares,

and the windows of the room being thrown open, we cannot be surprised that such inflammable articles soon ignited, and spreading to his carpet, made his bed much warmer than he wished for.

Though not severely burned, he was considerably scorched; my character of hakkim, however, being completely established, he submitted to be thickly encased in raw cotton, a heap of which most opportunely happened to be in a corner of the room, and which, if it had taken fire, would in all probability have caused the destruction of the entire building. My remedy, notwithstanding the evident astonishment it created in the by-standers, was effectual, as the patient recovered by morning; but instead of the virtue being attributed to the cotton, it was firmly believed by all present that it was owing to a charm, and that I must be a *muned-jimbashi*.

My reputation as an astrologer was still more firmly established on inspection of my pocket-compass, sketch-book, and drawing utensils, which everywhere underwent quite as minute a scrutiny, and excited even more astonishment among these people than in the inhabitants of

the Caucasus. The one was regarded as a most wonderful invention of magic, while the little instruments that could write without ink, together with the drawings, were objects of admiring astonishment, and I was universally regarded as a man who united the character of hakkim with that of magician, my knowledge of the healing art being supposed to result from acquaintance with divination.

Like every other town and village constructed in the Turkish fashion, Khoppa is a miserable place. It is, indeed, singular that this people should never have invented or copied from their neighbours some better style of building. The villages are nothing better than burrows; the walls and roofs of the houses are often covered with grass,—the one being wattles, plastered with mud, and the other thatched with the leaves of Indian corn. In short, to this, as to everything else, has the blighting influence of Turkish rule extended.

The next morning our Armenian was so fortunate as to find a Turkish boat to take us to Trebizond; and having sold our horses, and laid in a small stock

of provisions, we jumped on board with no little pleasure. The vessel, it is true, was a nondescript, of about a hundred and fifty tons burden,—short, broad, very deep, and nearly open to the sea; one huge ill-shaped mast rose in the bows, to which a large sail was hoisted; besides this there was a small jigger-mast abaft, and a gallows alongside of it, by which to lower the main-mast in pulling to windwards.

Nor were the crew, a motley race of Turks and rayahs, less noticeable than the vessel; some were attired in tarpaulin jackets, red caps, and linen trowsers, as ample in their dimensions as petticoats, while others exhibited the full Turkish costume. But however rude these boats may be in appearance, they sail well, and weather a storm infinitely better than many a nobler craft.

Any vessel, however uncouth its appearance may be, careering proudly beneath a cloud of swelling canvass, is a beautiful object; but when viewed in junction with the vast ocean, and the majestic blue dome of heaven, it forms a sublime picture; and yet, with all the admiration which it is calculated to excite, where is the man who

does not with pleasure exchange his winged Mercury for terra firma?

Hence it was with unmixed satisfaction that, after two days sailing, we landed at Trebizond, and bade adieu to the Captain and crew, who, to say the truth, were adepts in their profession, and as civil and good-natured as if they belonged to a Rotterdam steamer, although the amount of our fare was not so much as would have been expected by the steward of a vessel of that description as a douceur.

At Trebizond we again heard the most alarming accounts of the plague, and of the ravages it was then making throughout the whole of Asia Minor: many of the merchants (Franks) in the town had completely intrenched themselves in their houses, and held little or no communication with each other; they received neither papers nor money, till these suspected plague conductors had gone through a purifying ordeal; while the approach of every stranger was dreaded, lest he might be the medium of communicating this horrible pestilence.

I fortunately found an asylum for a few days

at the house of Effendi Devlet—a Binbashi, commander of a thousand men, as his title implies, the fellow traveller whom I mentioned in my last work; consequently we were not obliged to put the hospitality of the good people of Trebizond to the test. Our excellent host received us with all the kindness of an attached friend; and as he is very wealthy, and lives in a corresponding style, we had abundant reason to be contented.

Our Binbashi seemed to have acquired, since I had last seen him, a perfect mania for European refinement and usages. I had been only absent a few months, and on my return I found that his house, which, according to our ideas, was more gaudily than neatly furnished, was supplied with every article that a Frank could desire. There were chairs, tables, chiffoniers, secretaires, and chests of drawers, evidently of the newest Vienna patterns; in addition to which there were knives, forks, spoons &c. for the dining table, and many other little conveniences perfectly novel to this most exclusive people. The sofas and divans, which were really comfortable, and

covered with rich silk, combined Asiatic magnificence with European elegance; the walls were lined with rich tapestry, and inlaid here and there with looking glasses, and instead of paintings and engravings, adorned with sentences from the Koran, embroidered in gold on a velvet ground, and set in gilt frames.

Coffee, here as everywhere the favourite beverage of the Turk, was served with more than common splendour; the tray appeared to be of massive gold, while cups of the finest china rested on gold stands, richly chased; correspondingly magnificent was the attire of the attendants, and still more so that of the women, who always visited us for an hour or two in the afternoon, but nothing could prevail upon them to appear without the veil; still their introduction to strangers was a great innovation upon the ancient habits of the people, and will no doubt be followed by many more.

The principal wife of my host being a Circassian, and related to my young friend prince Beitzroukou, he was quite at home; and our host himself, who was also closely allied by consanguinity to that nation, spoke their language with great fluency; and of course the joy of the

whole party, on hearing of the complete success of the mountaineers during this year's campaign was most enthusiastic.

Having in my preceding work given my readers a lengthened account of Trebizond, now the great mart of English commerce on this side of the Euxine, together with a description of the coast of Anadolia, and the advantages and conveniences which travellers and merchants derive from the regular plying of the English steamer, the Crescent, between this town and Constantinople, any further details would be unnecessary; suffice it to say, that we took our passage in that fine and well ordered vessel for the capital of the Ottoman empire.

I cannot, however, omit to mention the astonishment of the young mountaineer on entering the steam-boat, and his eager curiosity to become acquainted with every detail connected with its navigation. He did not exhibit any ill-timed wonder, but pursued his inquiries with good sense and seriousness, combined with an intellectual expression natural to the Circassian people. On the other hand, my Jew servant, Nathan, a Silesian, by his repeated exclamations

of surprise, afforded much merriment to the Frank passengers.

After leaving Sinope we had a strong wind in our favour, which soon increased to a gale so violent, that I had every reason to be thankful that I was not on board the Turkish boat which I had just quitted, for however well these little vessels may be calculated to weather a storm, I was better pleased that my safety was confided to the skill of a British seaman. The whole heaven was obscured by dark angry clouds; the waves rose high, and the ship rolled so frightfully as to render the engine entirely useless. However, these Black Sea gusts are not of long duration, for in four or five hours it was succeeded by a calm, which was so far fortunate as otherwise we could not have made the entrance into the narrow* strait of the Bosphorus without some

* The whole length of the Bosphorus is about twenty English miles, with a strong current from north to south, computed to run at the rate of four miles an hour. The Sultan is about erecting two light-houses, one on each side of the entrance, on the most approved European principle, to defray the expense of which a toll will be imposed upon all vessels entering the strait. How thankful will the mariner be for this much desired improvement.

risk, its breadth not exceeding one English mile, while the almost perpendicular steepness of the banks adds not a little to the danger, and has already proved the destruction of many a gallant ship.

It is impossible to consider the nature of the Thracian Bosphorus without feeling convinced that it has been formed by some dreadful convulsion of nature; and on viewing the rivers that flow into the Euxine, we cannot but be of opinion that the inundation which tradition tells us overwhelmed Thrace and the Grecian isles, here had its origin; but having dwelt on this hypothesis more at length in my late work, I will here merely allude to it.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the season, nature in this heavenly region was still clad in all her loveliness, and we were now sailing beneath the beams of a warm sun, with a horizon as clear as if it were summer in a less favoured clime.

The white-washed walls of the castles of Europe and Asia, monuments of antiquity, and which might be rendered so formidable as a defence, in the hands of any other people but the Turks, are

the first objects that strike the traveller on entering the Bosphorus, and highly embellish by their majestic forms, the most beautiful landscape perhaps in the world.

A little further on we came to the pretty painted houses of Buyukderé, extending for nearly two miles along the water's edge, overhung by verdant hills, well laid out flower gardens, and shady walks. Nor was the opposite shore on the Asiatic side less picturesque and imposing. There was a fine range of lofty hills, covered with every description of tree and shrub that could lend their aid in imparting romantic beauty and fertility to the landscape; and if the buildings were more dispersed, each being surrounded by its own extensive grounds, that circumstance added not a little to the pleasing variety of the scene.

Buyukderé is well known as the country retreat of most of the foreign ambassadors and wealthy Franks of the city of the Sultan; and being entirely inhabited by Christians, their taste and wealth have contributed to embellish it by a mixture of European elegance and Asiatic splendour, visible in the style of the buildings and

well laid out grounds, which renders it a delightful residence.

I was fortunate in having for my compagnon de voyage an intelligent young Greek of Constantinople, who kindly performed the office of cicerone in describing the various interesting points on the shores of the Bosphorus, with which he appeared as familiar as the cockney captain of a Gravesend steamer is with the banks of the Thames. There, said he, is the giant* mountain, on which once stood the temple of Jupiter Urius, and the altar of the twelve gods; and a little lower down is the harbour of Therapia, marked by a small pointed rock, famous for the tradition of the faithless fisherman.

The village of Therapia, which has also been selected as the abode of European ambassadors,

* I afterwards visted this mountain, and found it to contain the tomb mentioned by Le Chevalier, who supposes it to have been that of Amycus, who was vanquished by Pollux. Valerius Flaccus and Dionysius, of Byzantium, term him a giant, who had established his horrible court in one of the neighbouring glens; and singular enough, the Turks have preserved the tradition, but, according to them, instead of the tomb belonging to the giant Amycus, they call it the last resting-place of Hercules.

presents, like Buyukderé, an elegant row of painted houses, encircling the creek, surrounded by terraces—laid out in vineyards, orchards, and flower gardens, forming an amphitheatre at once grand, graceful, and picturesque. At every angle the prospect changed; at every moment, as our vessel was hurried forward, a thousand new beauties were developed, nor were the people themselves, in their oriental costume, darting to and fro, in their gilded caiques, less novel and interesting; while the number of pretty kiosks and summer palaces, studded here and there, from the water's edge to the topmost height, belonging to the Sultan, and the other members of the imperial family, although bizarre enough in their architecture, and so light and airy that a blast of wind seemed sufficient to hurl them from their proud heights, imparted a fairy elegance to the lovely landscape.

About a mile beyond Therapia, we came to the ancient Pithicus,—opposite the gulph of Amycus, marked by a deep verdant valley, and adorned with avenues, lined with magnificent beech trees, —one of the most delightful spots on the Bos-

phorus. Here Turks, Franks, Jews, and Armenians mix together, and spend the day in mirth and revelry; here is to be seen a variety of costume, manners, and customs, which gives an interest to the scene peculiar to the environs of Stamboul.

We next passed the little bay Balta-Leman, famous for being the spot where Mahomet *Fatish* (the conqueror) constructed the bridge of boats which afforded a passage to his gallant followers into the very heart of the capital of the eastern empire, in spite of the ponderous chains which the imbecile Greeks had drawn across the harbour, in the vain hope of intercepting his advance.

This is the narrowest part of the Bosphorus, and is supposed to be the place where Darius, the Mede, threw over his bridge of boats when pursuing the Scythians. In modern days it is only celebrated as being the spot where the unfortunate victims of tyranny are strangled, and then thrown into the watery abyss, which leaves no trace of the dark deed; and if the gloomy Saracenic towers on each side could speak, how many tales of cruel despotism, of sanguinary ven-

geance, could they unfold! Only a little distance from this unhallowed spot is situated a palace of the Sultan, where he is accustomed to receive the foreign ambassadors during the summer.

But to return to the pretty pictures on the coast; the delightful villas, whose architecture is as showy as it is varied, surrounded by gardens and bowers, emitting a thousand fragrant odours, formed each a lovely landscape in itself. Still, however we may admire the ever changing panorama of the Bosphorus, the view of the city of the Sultan, that bursts upon the beholder on doubling the Dolma Baghtché, is indescribable; the effect of such a multitude of minarets, gilt cupolas, and gay-coloured houses, covering the sides of the hills surrounding the harbour, is so striking, that the traveller, on seeing it for the first time, is bewildered with astonishment; and never shall I forget the impression it made upon the stoical features of the young Barrakai chieftain, who could scarcely be persuaded that such a place, so many superb buildings, owed their existence to the labour and ingenuity of man; to his untutored mind it appeared more adapted to be an

abode for spirits in a state of blessedness than the dwelling of mortal man.

But, however picturesque and magnificent this coup-d'œil of proud Stamboul might be, however glorious the bright sun that cheered the earth with its glad presence, these delights were deceptive, for at this moment, in a region the most genial to the frame, and the most alluring to the senses, Azrael, the angel of death, was slaying his thousands!

CHAPTER IX.

Arrival at Constantinople — Singular surveillance by two Greeks — Biographical sketch of Cosrew, the Seraskier Pacha — Halil Pacha, son-in-law of the Sultan—His origin and character.

THOUGH travelling in the east is attended with many inconveniences, it is not without some advantages; for instance, I went on shore at Galata, and repaired at once to my inn, bag and baggage, without any mention being made of passport, custom-house, quarantine, or any other of those vexatious regulations that the traveller is exposed to in the civilized countries of Europe. There was no petty tyrant of a police officer to question and cross-question me as to whence I had come, or whither I was going, how long I intended to remain, and the purport of my journey,—and this in a country where despotism exercises such

arbitrary rule over its own subjects, but in which a foreigner enjoys liberty to its utmost extent. This freedom of action, when contrasted with the vexatious formalities a traveller is every where exposed to while journeying on the continent of Europe, reconciles him, in some measure, to the absence of domestic comfort, of which the inhabitants of Turkey have as yet not the slightest conception.

In Pera we took up our quarters at the hotel de l'Europe, a well-kept inn, but far too expensive in proportion to the price of provisions, which are extremely reasonable at Constantinople.

On entering the house, we were conducted into a small cabinet, the air of which breathed all sorts of perfumes, considered as preventives of the pestilence now raging in this devoted capital. Here we underwent a complete fumigation, a process to which all strangers are subjected during the prevalence of the plague. Having procured for my Circassian friend a costume befitting his rank and nation, I proceeded to introduce him to my Turkish friends, and to several of his own countrymen, with whom I had been previously

acquainted, so that he was in a short time completely at home. I also had the pleasure of being instrumental, in conjunction with a few other friends, of procuring him admission into the military school, where, from his active habits and intelligent mind, he will no doubt acquire accomplishments and information which may enable him to render important services to his country, and, in order to elude the vigilance of Russia, he assumed a Turkish name.

One circumstance, however, I cannot pass over, which appeared to me inexplicable, unless referable to my intercourse with the young mountaineer. Although I maintained the strictest incognito, and refrained from mentioning either the nation, or the purport of the visit, of my young friend to Stamboul, except to a few Turks and one or two Franks, enthusiastic friends to the Circassian cause, we never left our hotel without being closely followed during our excursions through the city by two men, habited as Greeks, who, if possible, never lost sight of us for a moment.

This unaccountable surveillance, which annoyed

me extremely, I was determined to put an end to at any risk. An opportunity soon offered itself of carrying my resolution into effect. As we were returning home one evening late through the Turkish cemetery at Pera, a dreary spot, situated on the side of the hill, we observed our two shadows, endeavouring to conceal themselves among the tombstones and dark foliage of the cypress trees. This was the moment to wring from them an explanation of their conduct, and having intimated my intention to my young companion, we sprang upon our spies, when, after a short but desperate struggle, we succeeded in securing them, and handed them over to the nearest guard; but nothing could be elicited tending to convict them of any bad intention towards us. On the person of each, however, was found a dagger; but as the practice of carrying this weapon is common to all classes in this city, it did not tend to criminate them. Our interference, nevertheless, had the effect of putting an end to any further annoyance of this description. That they were not in indigent circumstances was proved by the fact, that upon each man was

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found a sum of money considerable when viewed in connexion with his employments as cicerone and porter, which they informed us was their rank in life.

During my stay at Constantinople I was introduced to Cosrew, the Seraskier Pacha, who was about to resign his high office into the hands of Halil Pacha. Cosrew, who is nearly eighty years of age, though somewhat meagre and diminutive in person, is still robust and vigorous in constitution almost beyond example, with an eye as bright as if illumined with the vivacity of youth; and no person who reads the expression of his countenance, can doubt for a moment the character of the man that, during a long and stormy life, so successfully conducted the most complicated intrigues perhaps on record in the annals of the Turkish nation.

This singular individual was originally the son of a simple shepherd in the mountains of the Caucasus, where his tribe being at war with their neighbours, he was carried off and sold to the Turks, a circumstance to which he often refers; and he still speaks with delight of the many

happy days he spent while tending his father's flocks and herds on the ever verdant mountains of Upper Abasia. His tribe is called the Abchass, and their possessions join those of the Tûbi and the Barrakai.

He commenced his career as a slave to the celebrated Kutchuck Capidan Pacha (high admiral of the Turkish fleet), who soon discovered the intelligence and surprising capacity of the young mountaineer. Cosrew having gained his freedom, and being under the protection of so powerful a friend as the Capidan Pacha, rose successively to the highest military and naval rank, and ultimately became Pacha of Egypt,—a post at once confidential and important, and usually bestowed by the Sultan on his greatest favourite: but the wily Mehemet Ali, the present ruler, who served at that time in the capacity of a simple Binbashi in the Turkish army, found means to surround himself with a host of daring revolutionists, revolted, and drove Cosrew from Egypt.

On his return to Constantinople, Cosrew, although a fugitive instead of a viceroy, was received by his indulgent master with kindness;

and so far from condemning him to the fate which in Turkey so frequently awaits an unsuccessful minister, decapitation or a cup of poison, the Sultan made him Pacha of Bosnia. During his government of that province, he was instrumental in putting down a serious revolt of the inhabitants, for which he was elevated to the high dignity of Capidan Pacha: this was the proudest moment of his life, for he then held the same rank as that of his late beloved master, Kutchuck, to whose kindness he owed every thing, —and what a contrast did his present station exhibit from that of a common slave, sold like a brute beast to the highest bidder in the bazaar of Stamboul! He was now arbiter of the fate of thousands,—high admiral, and governor of the Grecian islands.

Cosrew was not, however, successful in his attempts to put down the revolted subjects of the Sultan, his master, in Greece, and once more returned to Constantinople, if not a fugitive, a man who had been baffled in his most important enterprise.

Disappointed, irritated, and suffering from

ague, Cosrew now employed himself in the less responsible avocation of political intrigue, for which he was by nature peculiarly well adapted: cunning, dissimulation, penetration, and sagacity, united with a sound judgment, combined to form in him one of the most active ministers who aided Sultan Mahmoud with his advice and assistance in the destruction of the Janissaries. He has also been equally zealous in his endeavours to model the troops on the European system, for which he professes the most enthusiastic admiration, asserting that its adoption is the only means by which internal commotion can be suppressed, and the empire maintained against foreign invasion.

During his continuance in office, he fulfilled the duties of Seraskier Pacha, considering his limited means and the disorganization of every office connected with the army, with great ability; to his precautions the capital more than once, during the last few years, owed its preservation from all the horrors of anarchy. Thus we see this extraordinary man, after a long life spent in the service of masters like the

Sultans of Turkey, whose good opinions are so easily forfeited, still maintaining his credit and power, and retiring into the calm retreat of private life,—although he has seen the greatest grandees of the empire, the reigning favourites of the day, either exiled to some distant province or mercilessly massacred in succession.

It is also remarkable that Cosrew's long intercourse with the Turks, among whom he has resided since he was a mere boy, has not made him forget the customs, manners, and courtesies peculiar to the mountaineers of the Caucasus; neither has he ever lost the disregard of the Circassians for luxury and effeminate splendour; and though his wealth is immense, he is still said to be contented with the simplest fare, preferring his barley cakes and skhou to the most tempting delicacies of the Stamboul cuisine.

The spirit of inexorable revenge, so inseparable from the Circassian character, he possesses to its full extent, for Cosrew never forgave an injury; and he would at this moment sacrifice his whole wealth, honours, and influence, to avenge the injury he received from Mehemet Ali, the ruler of

Egypt. But if, on the one hand, his enmity is implacable, on the other, his friendship is firm and enduring; nor, say his admirers, did he ever betray the man to whom he proffered the cup of hospitality.

It is true, some of his actions must receive the condemnation of a severe judge; but his advocates defend him on the plea that he was not personally responsible, being solely influenced by the command of a master whose mandate he ever obeyed as implicitly as if it had issued from the mouth of the prophet himself.

The peculiar relation in which Turkey stands at this moment with Russia renders it imprudent to allude to the political opinions of Cosrew with respect to foreign powers; we shall therefore merely say, that he is a decided admirer of the English character and nation, and that the failure of the plan to employ British officers in remodelling the Turkish army was not attributable to him, but to a neighbouring power, who is ever watching to destroy in the bud the rising influence of England in the councils of the Sultan.

If that power were actuated by motives of

good-will towards the stability of the Ottoman empire, why throw an obstacle in the way of every amelioration likely to impart to it force and power? Let a foreign officer in the service of the Sultan but be possessed of talent, courage, and energy, and he is certain, through the influence of some miserable intrigue, to be dismissed; while the worthless, unprincipled adventurer is left undisturbed to teach the Turkish soldiers European tactics!

Halil Pacha, who has succeeded Cosrew as seraskier, is also his countryman, and, like him, was sold as a slave at an early age. After passing through the service of a wealthy Armenian merchant and an indolent Osmanli, he was purchased by Cosrew, who, finding him possessed of great natural talents, caused him to be educated with the most sedulous care; and finding his conduct to be uniformly good, and his disposition kind and tractable, became so attached to his protegé as to adopt him for his son, and we now see Halil elevated to the highest rank that ever rewarded the merits of a slave; for, as Cosrew enjoyed the unlimited confidence of the Sultan, he

induced him to bestow upon Halil the hand of his dearest daughter. What a brilliant prospect is opened to this man, provided he has but the talents, moderation, and prudence of his friend and patron, the old Seraskier! The Sultan is in the decline of life, and the only heirs to his throne are his two sons,* sickly and debilitated in constitution.

* Since this was written, and while the work was going through the press, we find that one of the Sultan's sons is dead, and that Halil Pacha has been superseded as seraskier.

CHAPTER X.

Excursions in the environs of Constantinople—Description of Therapia — Belgrad and its aqueducts — Namuck Pacha—His character—Achmet Pacha, commander of the guards—His origin and remarkable elevation—Barracks at Scutari—Their administration—Review of the guards by the Sultan—Their dress and appearance—Inscription to commemorate the Russian intervention in 1833—Reforms of the Sultan—Some account of the dervishes—Military school of the guards.

HAVING already given my readers an account of my rambles through Constantinople and its environs, I shall go on to describe those places I had not time to explore during my preceding visit. Among these, Therapia, Belgrad, and Scutari, are the most interesting. We will therefore commence with Therapia, that delightful séjour, so advantageously situated on the picturesque banks of the Bosphorus.

The first object that strikes a stranger on entering the valley of Therapia is, the gigantic plantain, called after the great crusader, Godfrey de Bouillon, who, it is said, when on his route to the Holy Land, reposed, in company with his principal officers, under its venerable shade. Be this as it may, it bears the marks of great age, and is in every respect a very remarkable tree—a perfect phenomenon in the vegetable world—and, strictly speaking, is composed of seven or eight trees in a circular form, claiming one common root. Their united shade, as may be supposed, covers an immense diameter.

From hence I continued my route to the forest of Belgrad, for the purpose of viewing the aqueducts that supply the city with water. After passing through the valley of Buyuk-deré, we enter at once into what is called the Forest of Belgrad—a name, without the substance, nothing in the shape of a tree being there visible, unless, indeed, we so term a few stunted shrubs; it is, in fact, a mere desert, and were it not for the number of aqueducts we see in every direction, and the magnificent reservoirs of marble that pre-

sent a coup-d'œil so imposing as to recal to the imagination the grandeur of immortal Rome, the place would not be worth visiting.

The management and administration of these aqueducts and reservoirs are confided to a few individuals, whose families have exercised these duties since the time when Mahomet first planted the crescent in Stamboul, the office being hereditary. They fulfil their trust admirably, as the city is plentifully supplied with excellent water.

The first reservoir that attracted my attention was that erected by the Sultana Walido, one of the very few women in Turkish history who ever played a prominent part in politics. It is truly superb, being entirely encased in white marble, and will immortalize her name to the latest posterity.

Besides this, there are several others near the miserable villages of Belgrad and Burgos, more or less worthy of inspection; but that which most vividly recals the magnificence of Rome before her decline, is the one erected, according to some, by Constantine, or, as others will have it, by Jus-

tinian. There is also another, recently finished by Sultan Mahmoud, and also encased in white marble,—a worthy souvenir of his anxiety to supply the inhabitants of his capital with an element so necessary to the health of man—so indispensable to the professors of the Mahometan religion.

On my way to Constantinople I passed through Scutari, in consequence of an invitation I received from Namuck Pacha to see the barracks and the military school—of which institution he may be said to be the founder—and also to witness a grand review which was to be held the ensuing day in presence of the Sultan, when the troops were to be manœuvred by Achmet Pacha, the commander-in-chief of the guards.

Namuk, one of the most intelligent young Turkish officers of the day, is well versed in the French and Italian languages; active and courteous, his manners are as distingué, and his conversation as intelligent, as those of a well-bred, well-educated European.

Not so the commander-in-chief of the guards, Achmet Pacha. His manners are brusque, his

tournure is inelegant, we may even say, vulgar; while his unintellectual features are stamped with the plebeian origin of the man, who from being originally a cobbler, has been successively promoted to a pachalik, then to be commander-in-chief of the guards, and now to the dignity of capidan pacha! There is neither intelligence in his countenance nor quickness and decision in his movements to justify so rapid an elevation; and it only shews want of tact and judgment in a ruler to exalt an individual to the highest military and naval rank for no merit, we are persuaded, of his own, but because he might happen to have flattered the caprice and pleased the fancy of his patron. Poor Turkey! if thy destiny is to be confided to such defenders—if thy battles are to be fought by such generals and admirals—the Northern eagle will soon trample thy national emblem in the dust!

The barracks at Scutari, built upon an eminence, are perfectly healthy, and constitute one of the finest structures in the metropolis or its suburbs. The form is an oblong square, closed in on every side except the entrance; and so

vast is the edifice as to be capable of accommodating at least ten thousand men, that being the number proposed by Sultan Selim, the projector.

The administration of the barracks, when we remember that we are in Turkey, is admirable,—the magazines being well supplied with provisions, and every want of the soldier, however trifling, attended to. In fact, the whole establishment is equal, if not superior, to others of a similar description I had seen in Russia and some other parts of Europe. To a traveller from the west there would appear, indeed, a sad deficiency in beds; but a Turkish soldier is quite contented with a piece of carpet as a substitute, and would feel at a loss how to use the novel luxury if furnished with such as we have in Europe. The men are served twice a day with an abundant supply of meat in the form of a pillaff, or some such arrangement of the Turkish cuisine, in addition to their barley cakes and yaourt. The private soldier is also paid about four shillings a month, clear of all stoppages; so that, taken altogether, they are much better off than the majority of the sol-

diers belonging to the continental powers of Europe.

However much I might admire the barracks and their administration, my favourable sentence cannot extend to the military tenue of the troops, although they at this time performed their evolutions in presence of the Sultan and his numerous staff, and were commanded by the famous cobbler, Achmet Pacha. It is true, they executed their movements with tolerable precision; but I do not think I ever beheld in any country a set of fellows with more unprepossessing countenances. They were for the most part below the standard for guards, clumsily made, and by no means so robust as might be expected; but, to crown all, the habit of sitting cross-legged had given a curve to their limbs sadly at variance with a military bearing; neither has all the drilling of their European instructors been able to accomplish a change in their manner of locomotion, their march being a movement compounded of a strut and a shuffle.

Their dress, also, added nothing of military pomp to their appearance, as it was at the same

time badly cut and of the coarsest materials, and completed by that most ungraceful and inappropriate of all head-dresses, the *fez*, or red cap, not like that which half covers the head of the Greek, and is rather picturesque in its effect than otherwise, but clumsily made, high, and padded; it rests on the ears, which, in a Turk, are somewhat too large, and protrude from the head, like those of the Mongul Tartars.

In short, the only graceful article of dress in the military equipment of the tacticoes, as they are termed, is the mantle worn by the officers: the colour is a fine Turkish red, and being fastened at the throat with a silver clasp, frequently enriched with a precious stone, and descending in ample folds below the knee, is at once warlike and elegant; while the only ornament we can admire about the fez is, the blue tassel, made of silk or wool, streaming from the top.

But why discard the eastern turban? Its ample folds had at least the effect of defending the head from the rays of the sun and the stroke of a sabre. Besides, the Osmanli would make quite as good a soldier if he had retained his own pic-

turesque costume, instead of looking, as at present, awkward and ill at ease in his European habiliments.

I often wondered, while travelling in Turkey, where travellers found the fine race of men they describe. Tastes, to be sure, differ in these matters; but in my opinion, with the exception of a few families of high extraction, who resemble their Greek or Circassian mothers, the Turks, as a nation, are inferior in personal appearance to those least favoured by nature among the inhabitants of Europe; and we know it to be a fact, when the Turks first invaded Europe, the writers of that period represented them as remarkable for the utter absence of personal advantages, notwithstanding they derived every assistance from a costume admirably adapted for concealing the defects and developing the beauties of the person.

After the review, I rode with Count N——, a Russian traveller, and two or three Turkish officers, to visit the spot on which the Russians encamped in 1833, when their presence delivered the Sultan from the most imminent peril: by his orders an inscription has been engraved on the

side of the rock that commands the plain, to perpetuate the event, and designate a spot so famous in Turkish history.

It is written in the Turkish language, and may be rendered as nearly as possible in the following words:—

"Reader, behold the plain that once served as a resting place to the great Russian army! Let that event be for ever recorded in the annals of Turkey! May an alliance so auspiciously commenced between two great powers be cemented still closer! and may this inscription preserve to all eternity the happy event!"

To the Sultan himself, say the Turkish patriots, the event was a most timely interference; but to the empire it has been fraught with degradation. If the ruler was saved from deposition, the country lost its independence!

The assistance demanded, and so promptly given, has broken down the spirit of the Turk, who well knows that, on the first ebullition of patriotic feeling, a Russian army would again succour its feeble ally, and destroy the growing insurrection in its bud. As I am no friend to revolutions, may the Sultan wisely and profitably employ the advantages he has acquired in endea-

vours to regenerate his people, not by acts of tyranny, deeds of oppression, or compulsory reforms unsuited to their manners and religion, but by making them sensible of their degraded state, and by teaching them to estimate the value of the changes intended to improve their condition.

A nation, however, sunk in apathy and destitute of public feeling, cannot be improved by force, nor by the efforts of one individual, however wise and rational he may be; nor yet by the arbitrary introduction of institutions diametrically opposed to the religion and customs of a people. Since the alliance with Russia, an ill-judged attempt has been made, in imitation of the custom of European sovereigns, to place the portrait of the Sultan in the public buildings,—an innovation as absurd as it was unwise, and which had no other effect than to irritate the whole Mahometan population in his empire, who, it is well known, entertain, from religious motives, the most deep-rooted aversion to every representation of the human form. In addition to this outrage against their prejudices, I understand the

new coinage in preparation is to be stamped with his effigy; government monopolies, passports, with all their disagreeables, and various other usages of despotic governments, are also in contemplation. Many of these regulations are well adapted to other countries, but to introduce them into this is an infringement on the customs of the people, without any commensurate advantage being gained, either in civilizing, or giving them a taste for European manners.

The Turk appears at present passive to the introduction of these measures; still, some unexpected event may arouse his slumbering indignation. The situation of a monarch who has lost the confidence of a people must ever be regarded as precarious. Foreign support is at all times a feeble prop for a throne; and a revolution may burst forth to work his destruction before another Russian army could arrive to his rescue; for certain it is, that the people manifest a dislike to his rule, and are becoming more and more disgusted with his slavish submission to the will of the cabinet of St. Petersburg.

In short, the Sultan is not a man of genius;

he is not the character—firm, resolute, patriotic, and self-sacrificing—we would wish to see at the present moment at the head of this much-debased empire, Sultan Mahmoud being merely a copyist of Mehemet Ali, without possessing a particle of his shrewdness or capacity as a reformer. Add to this, his education has been miserably neglected; and, unacquainted as he is with the science of political economy and the machiavelian policy of the European cabinets, he is certain, in all his transactions, to become the dupe of his wily neighbour.

Scutari is the best built among the suburbs of Constantinople; the streets are even broader than those of the metropolis, and the environs are delightful. The Turkish cemetery is also the largest, most beautiful, and best kept of any other. The cypresses, which are in great numbers, and have attained an immense size, are highly imposing; while their gloomy shade seems intended by nature to shroud the precincts of the tomb. A cemetery being the favourite lounge of this people, numbers of all classes are constantly seen promenading, in all their gay and picturesque cos-

tumes: at the same time, many a mourning widow, many a weeping orphan, many a bereaved parent, come here to deplore the loss of all that had endeared them to existence.

Previous to leaving Scutari, I visited the place of worship belonging to the dervishes. On entering, we found them performing their peculiar devotional exercises,—a sort of dance, not unlike the German waltz, except that the cadence is more steady, and the motion more rapid. Every one of these devotees exhibited, in his hollow eyes and emaciated frame, the effects of this most pernicious and fanatical exercise, for they rarely terminate it till they fall senseless on the floor. Indeed, I was assured by an intelligent Turk, my companion, that a very zealous member of this order, however robust may be his constitution, rarely attains the age of forty.

The celebrated Scheik Hadgi Bechtasch was, it appears, the founder of this order of Mahometan monks; and though its members strictly adhere to the profession of Islamism, the institution is not acknowledged by the laws of the prophet. Still, the dervishes are held in great reverence by

the people, whose voluntary contributions amply suffice for their support. The order must likewise be very ancient, and extremely honourable in the opinion of the government and the people, since the chief of all the dervishes has the privilege of buckling the sword of Othman on the Sultan at the ceremony of his coronation.

Strangers, of whatever creed, are permitted to witness the service of the dervishes, in a gallery appropriated to their accommodation, and which runs round the vast hall in which this singular devotional exercise is performed. It is always preceded by prayer, singing, and music; but no rational man can behold this ridiculous exhibition, performed by men venerable in appearance, and who firmly believe that by so doing they are honouring the Divinity, without pitying their delusion; for we must believe that no other motive than sincere religious zeal, however misguided, could induce them to become members of a fraternity enjoining a duty so painfully laborious. Above all, notwithstanding they are paupers, we cannot charge them with a disposition to idleness,

which is too frequently the actuating motive of those mendicant monks who profess Christianity.

Of all the establishments I visited in Stamboul and its suburbs, the military school of the guards gave me the greatest satisfaction,—a school which, if properly encouraged and maintained by the Sultan, may tend more towards disciplining the Turkish army, and thereby strengthening the government, than any other institution yet established on European principles; but unfortunately, in Turkey, such is the influence of intrigue and the caprice of the Sultan, that the plan of to-day is reversed by the whim of to-morrow.

This establishment is entirely under the direction of Namuk Pacha, to whom I before alluded as one of the most intellectual and best educated Osmanlis in the empire. He watches over its welfare with the most sedulous care, and never fails to visit it daily. The young men are generally selected from among the guards, the preference being given to those who display superior intelligence and dexterity in military exercises.

In addition to being instructed in European discipline, the pupils are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography; the more abstruse branches of knowledge, such as astronomy, mathematics, &c., have not yet been introduced, for want of efficient professors, although the school is furnished with the necessary instruments.

The Lancasterian system of education has been adopted; and such has been the progress of the pupils, that I was assured by the governor they learn to read and write in seven or eight months, while, with the old Turkish method, nearly the same number of years were employed for this purpose.

CHAPTER XI.

Excursion to Brusa—Beauty of the scenery in its vicinity—Fertility of the soil—Industry of the inhabitants—Their manufactures—Mineral springs—Deserted state of the country in the vicinity of the Sea of Marmora—Reflections on the blighting influence of Turkish rule—Characters of Sultans Selim III. and Mahmoud.

My next excursion in the environs was to Prusa (or Brusa), one of the most remarkable towns in the Turkish empire, and which I would recommend every traveller who may sojourn even for a short time in Stamboul to visit. The town itself is highly interesting, as being the ancient capital of Bythnia, and founded by Hannibal, not the great Carthaginian commander, but a famous chief of that name who flourished a hundred and sixty years previous. Nor is its romantic situation, at the foot of Mount Olympus, surrounded

by the most charming landscapes, less calculated to delight the admirers of nature in her loveliest form. In addition to which, the traveller, during his excursions over Mount Olympus, the shelving hills and secluded dells of the ancient Bythnia, may study at his leisure the manners and customs of the wandering Turcomans, without any fear of being molested by that pastoral people, who still practise the primitive virtues of hospitality and good faith towards a stranger.

The inhabitants of Prusa, composed of Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, deserve to rank among the most intelligent, industrious, and courteous in the Ottoman empire; and, notwithstanding the barrier of religion, customs, and manners, that separates them, they live together in friendship and harmony. At a time when other parts of this distracted empire were torn by civil dissensions,—when the hand of the incendiary, and the stiletto of the assassin, everywhere executed the deed of darkness in open day,—the olive branch still waved over this fortunate town. Even the governors of Prusa, said an old Greek, my informant, were always characterized by

more humanity than those of other towns; perhaps they were in some measure influenced by the circumstance that it was the capital of the founder of their dynasty, the virtuous Othman, or Osman, whose tomb, with that of his son Orcan, lies at the village of Chirchée, in its immediate vicinity.

After leaving the sea of Marmora, on ascending a hill of considerable elevation, we perceive Prusa, beautifully situated at the foot of Mount Olympus. Its picturesque effect when viewed from a distance would strike the most fastidious landscape painter with admiration. Minarets and domes are seen mingling their pretty forms with the richest vegetation of the forest; while the hoary-headed Olympus towers to the heavens, imparting majesty and grandeur to a landscape seldom equalled for the beauty and variety of the objects it embraces.

The country in its vicinity is also fertile to exuberance; numerous springs and rivulets descend from the mountain, and irrigate it without having recourse to the labour or the ingenuity of man. The olive, the mulberry, the vine, and the ches-

nut, with thousands of rare plants, adorn the plains, while the wide-spreading oak, the valona, and the beech, embellish the sides of the hills.

It is impossible to behold this town and its delightful neighbourhood, an earthly paradise in appearance, without being reminded of the declaration of its ancient king, the timid Prusias. "Why," said he, "should I entangle myself in the conflicts of other nations? why should I ally myself with a fallen conqueror, become a party to his quarrels, and thus endanger the possession of my Bythnia, where I enjoy every happiness the most delightful country in the universe can afford?"

It was to this monarch that Hannibal fled for protection after being subdued by Scipio Africanus, and, unfortunately for the character of the Bythnian king, he pusillanimously consented to deliver up his relative and guest; but the proud warrior, sooner than grace the triumph of his conqueror, and become the sport of the populace of Rome, terminated his existence by poison, which he had reserved in a ring for that especial purpose.

The population of Prusa and its environs is

computed to be nearly a hundred thousand; the majority are engaged in commercial pursuits and manufactures, particularly of silk and cotton, Prusa being in this respect the Lyons and Manchester of Turkey. Here we see splendid bazaars filled with the showy and expensive wares peculiar to the oriental market, but considerably lower in price than articles of the same description and quality at Stamboul, the greater portion being the production of the industry of the inhabitants.

The streets are narrow, and the houses, as is universally the custom in Turkey, entirely built of wood. The fountains form the principal ornaments of the town; their limpid waters in a warm climate are delightfully refreshing, and relieve the dull monotony so characteristic of a Turkish city; in addition to which the varied costume of the inhabitants contributes in no inconsiderable degree.

Prusa also possesses several mineral springs, which have a considerable reputation for the number of cures they effect. The public baths, which are of the finest marble, and supplied with every convenience necessary for bathing, are much frequented by invalids, this town being a sort of

Carlsbad to the beau monde of the capital during the summer months.

On the conquest of Bythnia by Othman he made Prusa the capital of the tribes over whom he ruled, for at that early period we can hardly term them a nation; but such was the rapid progress of Turkish power, and the extension of its dominions, that it became necessary to transfer the seat of government to Adrianople, and finally to the city of Constantine.

After visiting the unpretending tombs of Othman and his gallant son Orcan, the two first Sultans of Turkey, whose virtues will in all probability not only survive the mouldering structures that enclose their earthly remains, but the empire which they founded, I returned to Stamboul, regretting that the lateness of the season prevented me from exploring Mount Olympus. As I passed over this beautiful and fertile country, the various objects around repeatedly reminded me of some passage of its ancient history, and of the great wealth of the vast population that once enjoyed in these fair fields all the blessings of existence: at present, a few ruins are the only

indications of the once celebrated Nicea, memorable for the siege of the Crusaders, and as being at one time the capital of the Grecian empire. It is also famous for the council held there, in which the heresy of Arius was condemned, and the Nicean creed composed and approved in the year 324. Nicomedia, the magnificent Nicomedia, has also passed away from the earth, leaving no trace to tell where it once stood.

As I journeyed along the coast towards Moudiana, a miserable little port on the sea of Marmora, the country continued to develop features the most beautiful and picturesque; the vine, the olive, and mulberry, were running wild for the want of care, and land the most fertile brought forth nothing but weeds,—the effect of the total absence of population, and of a long series of barbarous rule; thus realizing the Turkish proverb, which says, "No grass will grow where the Sultan's horses tread."

Oh, Othman! with all thy virtues, courage, and talents, what a curse have thy descendants proved to their fellow men! what a blight has thy race breathed over one of the fairest portions

of our globe! The regions they conquered have obtained from them no other boon save devastation and ruin! No man will regret their downfall; they will pass away from among the nations of the earth, like the proud city swept away by the mighty flood, which leaves no ruin to tell of its former grandeur.

Such will be the fate of thy name and people; unknown and uncertain has been their origin, and equally unknown and uncertain will be their remembrance in history, for they have left no memorial of their greatness, no monument of their fame and virtues. An irreclaimably barbarous horde, they have dwelt among the nations, unimprovable, intrenched behind ignorance and prejudice, and such they will remain till their fall—only known to posterity as a people singularly favoured by circumstances, but whose ignorance, self-sufficient pride, apathy, and negligence, deprived them of the advantages they had obtained.

What a lesson to succeeding nations of the impossibility of a people supporting an empire without a knowledge of the principles of good government! Other nations, however barbarous,

in process of time, became blended with the people they had conquered, if more numerous than themselves, and in process of time adopted their religion, manners, laws, and customs; but here we have the singular spectacle of a race, as great a stranger to the people over whom they rule, as different from them in all these particulars, as the predatory wandering hordes who followed the standard of Othman. In short, the Turks may be said to resemble a flight of migratory vultures, that settle on a land only so long as it is capable of affording food to their rapacity, for they have neither cultivated nor improved it; and now that it is nearly drained and exhausted, the course of events will in all probability drive the few who remain to seek a shelter in the Caucasus or central Asia, and to return to the predatory wandering habits for which nature designed them.

Some of my readers may perhaps consider this sentence against the Turks as too severe, and call up to witness against it the memory of the gallant Saladin, the magnanimous enemy of our heroic Richard, besides that of several other

talented warrior chiefs of the Turkish nation ; but however attractive the recital of their gallant deeds may be in romance, what amelioration have they wrought in the condition of their country—what monument immortalizes their virtues, either as rulers or individuals ?

If we impartially review the Turkish monarchs individually, from Othman and his virtuous son, Orcan, to the present Sultan, we shall not find one whose character will bear the test of a severe examination, or one who possessed the qualities necessary to form a just, a conscientious ruler, with the exception of the lamented Selim III. That excellent prince, who possessed a mind susceptible of the highest cultivation, was mild and conciliatory in his manners ; his natural good sense, and the progress he made in the knowledge of public affairs, shewed how admirably he was calculated to be the regenerator of any other people except the Turks ; but they, insensible of his value, unmindful of the benefits he conferred upon them, barbarously murdered him !

We have already shewn the unfitness of the present Sultan Mahmoud, to be a judicious re-

former of the institutions of his country: with a temper haughty and violent, his ill-judged policy and precipitate eagerness to enforce his measures, and descend to posterity as the regenerator of his people, has had no other effect than that of involving his whole empire in perpetual trouble and confusion, turbulence and discontent, and of drying up every regular and legitimate source of revenue.

It is true, he has won for himself an unenviable immortality as the destroyer of the Janissaries; for whatever disposition they might have evinced to tyranny and turbulence, the deed was sanguinary and cruel, almost without a parallel; that it was an unwise step to crush the military strength of his country, without having provided an adequate substitute, events have too fatally demonstrated, and this fearful sacrifice of human life has had no other effect than that of hastening the fall of his empire.

The unprejudiced traveller who may have wandered as I have done over this ruined empire, who has visited Constantinople, and conversed with the best informed Turks, Franks, and

rayahs of its population, will agree with me in every particular I have here stated, and also confirm the truth of the statement, that the modern Turks are but little in advance of their ancestors, the marauding hordes of Asia, in intelligence, without possessing the courage and the simple virtues which distinguished that people in the early part of their history.

With the exception of San Sophia—which owes its preservation to the circumstance of being converted into a mosque—and the great cisterns, those splendid works of the Greeks, now in ruins, not a vestige remains of the city of the last of the Constantines; even the breach by which the intrepid Mahomet entered the town has never been repaired. Throughout the whole empire not a single road is to be met with, and a bridge but rarely. With seas at her command, with numerous ports, protected from every wind of heaven, and capable of containing the fleets of nations, she is without a navy, without commerce. With a country fertile to exuberance, she is obliged to purchase grain from her neighbours. Mistress of a position so commanding that even

the most mediocre power of Europe or Asia would obtain, at least, the respect of the surrounding nations — yet with all these advantages, we see a government nearly destitute of resources, a ruler possessed only of the shadow of power, unable to quell the slightest tumult among his own subjects without having recourse to the bayonets of a neighbour, and that neighbour the arch-enemy of his country, his people, and his dynasty.

How deeply is it to be deplored that these beautiful and fertile provinces have fallen to the lot of a people whose dominion we must pronounce to be one of the severest scourges ever sent by Providence to chastize the nations. Wherever the race of Othman settled, the arts and sciences fled their approach, and their steps might be tracked by the desolation of the land over which they passed. Cities, once splendid, commercial, and rich, have become the abode of the birds of darkness, and the beasts of prey: even Stamboul, with its proud mosques, its thousand minarets, its beautiful kiosks, and pretty villages and villas on the Bosphorus, presents a picture of decay,

and its population is rapidly decreasing. This once famous metropolis of the Eastern empire, with the exception of the mosques, the seraglio, the bazaars, and one or two other public buildings, in the present day, is constructed entirely of wood; and however picturesque and showy these wooden edifices, painted with the most gaudy colours, may appear to the eye of the traveller, their interior is for the most part wretchedly miserable; and so badly are they put together, that the wintry wind penetrates into the interior, rendering them, in spite of their velvet tapestries, the most uncomfortable habitations that can be conceived. Then the pavement, if such it can be called, for its inequalities and filth surpasses even the most neglected town in Asia.

As we wander through this ill-fated capital, at every step we see the blackened remains of whole streets, which have been at various times consumed by fire, and then left to be the home of the canine scavengers and vultures, who occupy themselves in disputing for possession of the carrion left to encumber the highways. With respect to the decrease of the population

of late years, various causes are said to have contributed: the massacre of the Janissaries, the late war with Russia, and above all the mortality caused by the plague, from which it is never entirely exempt. Hence I have been more than once assured, from tolerably good authority, that at the present moment Stamboul and its extensive faubourgs do not contain more than four hundred thousand inhabitants; whereas little more than half a century ago they were estimated at nearly a million, and this when nearly every city in Europe has almost doubled its population within the same space of time.

We cannot but regret the decline of Constantinople, if it were for nothing else than the interest attached to it by the historian and the antiquary, a city so often the theatre of some of the most important events in the chronicles of the world; and so remote is its antiquity that we find considerable difficulty in tracing its origin. Pliny says it was anciently called Lygos; Justinian tells us it was founded by Pausanius, a Lacedæmonian chief; however, the general belief is, that it was first built by a general of the

Megarensians, called Bysas, to whom it probably owes its ancient name, Byzantium: it is recorded to have been sacked by Darius Hystaspes, and to have been even then a very considerable city. Here, at a later period, Constantine the Great swayed the destinies of one of the greatest empires the world ever saw; and here the infant fabric of Christianity was first invested with a character of stability and enduringness, by the fostering care of a mighty emperor.

CHAPTER XII.

The plague—Its effects upon the inhabitants of Constantinople—General observations respecting that disease—Meeting of the Divan and the Mahometan religious authorities—The adoption of preventive measures—Supposed causes of the plague at Constantinople—Method of treatment—Its symptoms—Visit to the plague hospital—Hints to travellers in the East—Anecdote of a Greek sailor.

Most of my readers have probably seen accounts in the public prints of the plague in Constantinople, and indeed, with few exceptions, throughout the whole Turkish empire, during the autumn and winter of 1836,—one of the most dreadful visitations ever inflicted on any country.

The picture of that unhappy city was indeed gloomy: pestilence had spread itself everywhere in the town and the suburbs, in horrors too appalling for description. The whole of the ambas-

sadors and consuls, every Frank and Turk whose avocations and finances would permit it, entrenched themselves in their town or country houses, or took their departure for some more salubrious city in the interior.

The most melancholy reports were constantly in circulation : one day we were told that the vicegerent of Mahomet himself had become its victim; another, the same fate was awarded to one or other of his sons, or the favourite Halil Pacha; then to some ambassador, rich Frank, or famous pacha.

These melancholy forebodings were particularly noticeable in Pera, that quarter of the faubourgs inhabited by the Franks. There nearly every house was closed; the servants were not suffered to move about; papers, parcels, and money, were never touched but with a pair of tongs; and before any person would venture to receive them, they passed through a fumigating process. Contagion and non-contagion were the only subjects discussed; the threatened invasion of Mehemet Ali, and the intrigues of the cabinet of St. Petersburg, were entirely forgotten. The medical authorities pro-

nounced walking in the streets to be highly dangerous, on account of the risk of touching an infected person; and if in despite of their dictum a man took air and exercise, it was necessary to carry a ponderous cudgel in self-defence, as he was liable to be knocked down if he accidentally came in contact with any of the few passengers that ventured abroad.

The strictest diet was enjoined; and the slightest indisposition excited the apprehensions of the sufferer and his friends that he was visited by the plague. In short, it was impossible to divert the imagination from its contemplation, for no person was allowed to enter a house without being subjected to the usual process of fumigation adopted as a preventive.

Still I must think that many of these precautions are useless, that the man who is the most fearful of disease is the first to take the infection, and that a cheerful mind and a vigorous constitution are the best preventives, for we all know that fear, by debilitating the mind, predisposes the body to disease of every description.

For myself, during the few days I remained in

Constantinople, I certainly did not spend my time in cherishing anxiety. I never confined myself an hour, neither did I exert any extraordinary care as to who I might or might not touch in the streets or the bazaars. I pursued no particular plan of regimen, amused myself as usual with my caique on the blue waters of the Golden Horn, and ascended the hills in the environs, whose bracing winds imparted elasticity to my frame and vigour to my mind,—the best of all preventives against disease.

Although the hoary frost had already spread its mantle over less favoured countries, the air here was deliciously balmy and soft; while a thousand delightful odours from Mount Olympus, Bulgurlu, and the other chain of encircling hills, were continually wafted over the devoted city.

The Sultan, at length, having become alarmed at the frightful progress of the pestilence, and the inefficacy of any method hitherto taken to arrest it, summoned a divan, with a view of eliciting some plan for its prevention in future, at which the Scheik-Islam and numbers of the most influential ullemas were present.

The Sultan, with assumed simplicity, demanded of them how it happened that his country above every other had been so repeatedly and severely visited by pestilence. The conclave, who had previously known the determination of their sovereign to erect quarantine establishments, similar to those in the dominions of his most faithful ally and cousin, the powerful emperor of Muscovy, like dutiful subjects, answered, that it was no doubt owing to the want of this precautionary system; but as the Koran absolutely forbids any measures of the kind, the question was involved in much difficulty.

After some discussion, it was proposed, that as the Sultan in his capacity of vicegerent of the prophet of the Lord is allowed great latitude in his infringements of the sacred law when the public benefit is concerned, it would be advisable for the scheik, the expounder of the law, to give the obnoxious passage a different interpretation. The proposition was agreed to, it being hoped that by this means the minds of the people would become reconciled to the projected innovation.

The important document was prepared and pro-

mulgated, to the effect that all true believers might rest satisfied it was the will of the prophet that quarantine laws should be established.

However powerful the Sultan might have considered himself, and however firmly he believed himself entitled as the vicegerent of the prophet to alter a passage in the Koran, there was a still greater power to be conquered before he could carry the measure into effect. The whole of the Mahomedan priests throughout the empire took the alarm; the fanaticism of the people was roused to fury; the Sultan was denounced as an infidel giaour, and one or two mad moullahs had the audacity to lecture him publicly as he was entering one of the mosques. Consequently the reforming sovereign found it necessary to defer the execution of his project to a more convenient season.

With respect to the causes of the frequency of the plague at Stamboul, the Frank population of that city are divided in opinion; some contending that it is generated in the Bosphorus, and consequently that no system of quarantine laws will suffice to prevent its visitations; others again, with

more plausibility, attributing it to the filthy habits of the people, and to their detestable wooden houses, of which the whole city, and indeed nearly every town and village in the empire, is composed, which are in truth complete nurseries for pestilence. I am also inclined to this opinion, or at least feel convinced that they tend to keep alive the seeds of infection; and assuredly the Sultan could not establish a law more calculated to improve the public health, than one which would compel the people to build their houses of stone, and, instead of decorating the interior with coloured paper and velvet tapestry, to white-wash them. To which we may add, that public sewers, above all, would tend to improve the health of the inhabitants.

If such measures were enforced, and the people could be prevailed upon to be cleanly in their persons, it is highly probable that the necessity for a quarantine establishment would, in a few years, be prevented. It is true, the Turk is enjoined by his religion to perform various ablutions daily, repair to the bath, &c. But the lawgiver, Mahomet, notwithstanding his divine inspiration,

having, we suppose, forgotten, or neglected, to establish any law rendering clean linen compulsory, the majority of the Osmanlis, left to their own discretion in this respect, never think it necessary to change it while a shred remains whole. A few among the better classes have, it is true, within the last few years, reformed this practice, and several others of a similar description; but the custom of passing the night on the divan without altering their dress is still very general.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the scientific details of medicine to hazard an opinion as to the causes of the plague; but it appears to me, and has been pronounced by medical men of acknowledged talent and research, to be a typhus fever of a most malignant nature, and may in many cases be overcome by having recourse, on its first appearance, to stimulants; the anti-inflammatory mode of treatment, so often pursued by some of the ignorant empirics of these countries, generally proves fatal. Nature herself indicates the best method of treatment, for it is well known that, on the commencement of frost, which invigorates the frame and braces the nerves, the

attacks of the plague are mild and seldom dangerous, and when the cold is extremely severe the principle of contagion is altogether inactive.

From the perusal of a journal kept by a medical friend of mine at Constantinople, it appears that great heat renders the virus of the plague nearly as inert as intense cold, those seasons of the year when it rages with the greatest virulence being the spring and autumn, when the weather is delightfully mild and temperate, while what we should call an agreeably cool summer is almost certain to be accompanied by pestilence.

The first symptoms of this horrible disease are nausea and headache, which in most cases are succeeded in a few hours by high fever and delirium. With some constitutions the virus is frequently of so malignant a nature that it circulates through the frame with a rapidity which in a few hours poisons the whole mass of blood, and causes immediate death, even before the primary symptoms are fully developed. That it is highly contagious, notwithstanding the multiplicity of arguments advanced by theorists to prove the contrary, there cannot be a doubt, for the breath,

or the slightest touch, will communicate it to some persons, while others, whom medical men term non-contagionists, may sleep in a plague hospital with impunity. On the other hand, thousands of persons who secluded themselves from every communication with their fellow men, laid in stores of provisions, barricadoed their houses, and shut out every breath of the damp night air (the most dangerous), were almost certain of falling victims to the disease.

Believing myself to belong to the class of non-contagionists, or at all events not entertaining the slightest fear upon the subject, I visited the plague hospital for the reception of the rayah population of the suburbs. Miserable, indeed, was this receptacle for human suffering, and he who is carried into it may consider that he has entered the last stage of his earthly pilgrimage.

The building appropriated as an hospital consists of several small cells, each ventilated by a grated window opposite the door, similar to those of a monastery. The cells were each merely furnished with a deal plank for a divan, a mattrass, and a sheet, which generally serves as a shroud for

the unhappy patient. An attendant, encased in his non-contagion dress, occasionally goes round and moistens the parched lips of the wretched inmates with a sponge saturated with some cooling drink prescribed by one of the medical men belonging to the hospital, who also visit their patients two or three times a day.

A fever hospital, even the best regulated, and in the most civilized country, is a truly melancholy scene; but any thing more calculated to sicken the heart of the spectator cannot be imagined than the interior of a plague hospital at Stamboul. The cadaverous, dejected, pain-worn features of some, the sallow crimson hue of others, the livid tinge of those in the agonies of death, and the raving delirium of those who had reached that stage of the disease, formed altogether a frightful picture of human misery. When life is supposed to be extinct, the bodies are dragged out in the winding sheet to make room for others; and such was at this moment the violence of the disease, that I was assured several men were employed the whole day and night in bringing in patients and carrying out the dead.

However virulent and fatal the plague may be in Stamboul, I cannot but think that if proper means were resorted to in its first stages many lives might be saved; and if a few clever medical practitioners were employed by the Turkish government, they might discover some more effectual method of treating it than that usually adopted, or at least devise some plan to arrest its progress, and prevent its spreading by contagion. But nearly the whole of the medical practitioners in this city and the hospitals being miserable quacks from every part of Europe, little advancement in science can be hoped for from their united skill. Indeed, the healing art is as imperfectly understood as it is badly practised, throughout these countries, whether its professors happen to be Franks or natives.

For this reason, no traveller who values his life should visit Stamboul, or any part of the Turkish dominions, or even South Russia, or any of the countries of the east, without being in some degree acquainted with medicine, particularly the use of the lancet. Independently of frequent visitations of the plague, inflammatory fevers,

bilious remittent, common intermittent, ophthalmia, and dysentery are very prevalent. Most of these diseases have their origin in the rank vegetation, the marshes, forests, jungles, and the saline incrustations so frequently met with in the East, the whole of which may generally be subdued by using such remedies as are within the reach of every traveller,—for instance, copious bleeding, aperient medicines, and a spare diet. James's fever powders, above every other, should form part of the materia medica, as a small dose has saved the life of many a man when far removed from medical assistance.

The influence of an eastern sun upon a European constitution is sensibly felt by many persons; but however great may be the transition from a temperate to a warm climate, man has the power of counteracting its evil tendencies; for this a thousand expedients suggest themselves to his mind; he may call moral courage to his aid in order to invigorate his physical powers; and he may accommodate his apparel to the temperature of every clime. It is not, however, by having recourse to artificial stimulants, which only excite

to be succeeded by greater exhaustion, that one can restore vigour to the frame when worn by fatigue, or enervated by heat; neither is it by indulging inordinately in animal food that one can prevent the approach of disease; for what is moderation in a cold, is intemperance in a warm climate. In short, the traveller should in most particulars follow the example of the natives in their manner of living.

Mahomet, when he commanded his followers to abstain from wine and strong drink, evinced a thorough acquaintance with the climate of the East; nor was he wrong when he enforced frequent ablution as a virtue,—a precept, however, which the Turks have contrived to render nugatory by their dirty habits—habits that would engender disease in the healthiest country in the universe.

I cannot leave the subject of the fever hospital without relating an anecdote, which clearly shews that some constitutions are not susceptible of imbibing the virus of the disease, and is at the same time an instance of firm devoted friendship highly honourable to our nature.

A vessel having arrived at Constantinople from the Morea, one of the crew soon after he landed was seized with the plague, and sent to the hospital. A shipmate, who, it appeared, entertained for him the sincerest and most disinterested attachment, announced his intention of performing the office of his attendant, declaring that no power, no danger, should separate him from his friend. The captain remonstrated; the medical attendants represented to him the almost certain death to which he would expose himself, together with the fact that no power on earth could save his friend, the attack being of the most malignant kind; but every consideration for himself availed nothing when weighed against the chance of saving the life of the friend whose existence was indispensable to all his earthly happiness,—and he fulfilled his intention.

When in the hospital, he performed every office necessary to alleviate the sufferings and promote the recovery of his patient, and at the time I saw him his efforts had been so far successful that the invalid was pronounced out of danger. In order to shew me that his naturally good constitution,

supported by courage, was capable of resisting contagion, he dressed the ulcers peculiar to this disease in the presence of the medical attendant and myself.

I am happy to be able to add that, on subsequent inquiry, I learned that the self-sacrificing friendship of this noble fellow was crowned with complete success; his patient was restored to health: the non-contagionists triumphed in what they considered another confirmation of the truth of their theory; while the two friends sailed for Greece, no doubt heartily glad to escape from a place that might then be truly termed the "City of the Plague."

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure from Constantinople—Coast of the Black Sea from the Bosphorus to Varna—Description of the route from that town to Silistria—Mode of travelling—Hirsova, on the Danube—Its destruction by the Russians—Arrival at Galatz—Lazaretto—Performance of quarantine.

THE arrival of the Austrian steam-boat, the Ferdinand, in which I expected to take my passage on its return to Galatz, in Moldavia, being uncertain, and the lateness of the season not rendering it advisable to adopt a merchant-vessel as my conveyance to England, I determined to go by sea to Varna, and from thence cross the Bulgarian mountains to Silistria, particularly as I had the temptation offered me of the society of a German officer, in the service of the Sultan, who

was deputed to inspect the Turkish fortresses on the Lower Danube.

Our vessel belonged to a Greek, being one of those little traders engaged in supplying the capital with provisions and fuel from Bulgaria. We soon reached the entrance of the Black Sea; passing close to Ignada, which is situated on a high rock, we next came to Sizopoli, the ancient Apollonia. This town has a most commodious harbour; and being the only one that offers a safe and convenient anchorage on the whole line of coast from the Bosphorus to the mouth of the Danube, any other people than the Turks would have rendered it long ago a rendezvous for their naval force in the Euxine. Sizopoli is situated upon a small peninsula, and, judging from the ruins of a wall, was at one time fortified.

The whole of the Roumelian and Bulgarian coast, from the Bosphorus to Varna, is very rocky, and by the incessant action of the current towards that strait is rendered extremely steep. We experienced the full force of this current, for, notwithstanding we had a strong breeze in our favour, the passage to Varna occu-

pied two days. Perhaps there is no town in the Turkish empire better known by reputation than Varna, owing to the gallant defence made by its garrison during the late war with Russia, who, being unable to reduce it by force of arms, was obliged to resort to bribery, and prevailed with the traitor Useff Pacha, the governor, to deliver it for a stipulated sum.

The bay is by no means convenient, nor does it offer a safe anchorage for large vessels; nevertheless, it is considered by the Turks a more important position than Sizopoli, because, on taking possession of this town, they found the fortifications in tolerable preservation; it must, however, be remembered, in extenuation of the predilection of that people for fortresses, that the strength of the nation does not consist in its navy, but in the bravery of its troops when fighting behind stone walls.

The town is large and ill built, and is said to contain ten thousand inhabitants, composed of Turks and rayahs. It is very ancient, and has acquired no little celebrity on account of the great battle fought in its vicinity, between the Poles and

Turks, in the fifteenth century, commanded by their respective sovereigns, the gallant Lladislaus and the fierce Sultan Amurath II. Poor Lladislaus, after performing prodigies of valour, when on the point of gaining the victory, fell, owing to his rashness, into the hands of the Janissaries, who, notwithstanding he was badly wounded and incapable of offering any further resistance, barbarously murdered him. The Poles, on receiving the disastrous intelligence, gave way, and were routed with great slaughter.

We did not make any stay at Varna beyond the time necessary for inspecting the fortifications, and making a few arrangements for crossing the mountains to Silistria.

These Bulgarian mountains, which form part of the great Hæmus chain, have been so often described by modern travellers, that any lengthened details respecting it would neither interest the reader nor convey any additional information. With my faithful Nathan, and a few Turkish soldiers, whose duty it was to procure horses and provisions for the German officer, as our attendants, we set forward on our journey; and when I

leaped into the saddle, I felt not a little thankful to Providence that I was sufficiently vigorous in health and buoyant in spirits to undertake any tour, however long and fatiguing. Indeed, it was impossible to feel otherwise than grateful at escaping from a country so fearfully visited by pestilence; add to which, I looked forward to the prospect of returning home with a delight that imparted to me additional energy.

The distance from Varna to Silistria is about twenty-five leagues. The whole of the villages, with hardly an exception, are inhabited by Turks; indeed, the careless negligence exhibited in the houses, the wretched manner in which their fields were cultivated,—in short, everything we saw, sufficiently indicated the inhabitants to be disciples of the Mahomedan religion; for however much the rayah population of Bulgaria may be behind that of the rest of Europe in civilization and intelligence, their superior neatness and industry, when compared with the Turks who reside among them, is most striking. It is, indeed, impossible to avoid contrasting the incorrigible barbarism of the followers of Mahomet with the most

debased among the people of Christendom, since even in this much-neglected country, which at best is only a few degrees removed from a savage state, we find so decided a superiority of the one over the other. Notwithstanding, so far as their behaviour to us was concerned, we had no reason to be dissatisfied with the natives, who everywhere received us during our route with kindness and hospitality; and with regard to the danger of our expedition—a danger expatiated upon in the most glowing terms by some travellers—it existed, I am inclined to think, nowhere else but in their own imaginations; for however wild their looks, however uncouth in their dress, these people are peaceable, simple in their habits, and ever anxious to render a service to the unoffending traveller.

The Turks frequently pass over these mountains in an open *araba*, a species of four-wheeled cart; but anything in the shape of a road we may look for in vain, unless we give that term to a passage across the fields, which after rain becomes a complete mass of mud; consequently, the traveller is obliged to take another

direction in order to avoid it,—while, owing to the number of these tracks, which sometimes lead to different villages, the stranger is certain to be led astray, unless accompanied by one of the natives as a guide.

I bade adieu to my friendly companion, the German officer, at Silistria,—a miserable, half-ruined town, lately evacuated by the most faithful allies of the Sultan, the Russians, who here undoubtedly rendered some service to their protegé by the erection of one or two temporary bastions, and by partially repairing the fortifications. Above all, we must not forget to record that they most generously left for his use a few of the crazy guns that were mounted on them!

Silistria, of which I had merely obtained a glance while passing down the Danube in the steam-boat from Vienna to Constantinople, from its position, might easily be rendered impregnable; but the present fortifications, consisting merely of a long weak curtain and a few bastions, as badly built as they are ill-designed, would form a most inefficient defence against the attacks even of a mediocre European army. The situation of

Silistria, as a fortress, is admirable; the river not only being three quarters of a mile broad, to the Wallachian coast opposite, but so deep that a Russian fleet was enabled to assist the besieging army during the last campaign.

I now directed my course to Hirsova, situated a little lower down on the Danube, a very considerable town previous to the late war between the Turks and Russians, but which now presented one of those melancholy pictures of desolation so frequently wrought by Russian victories. Never did the most wild and barbarous hordes carry fire and sword into the country of an enemy with more utter disregard to the dictates of humanity—more ruthlessly crimson the soil—than did the Russians in their wars with Turkey.

In this unhappy town, (like the ill-fated Ismael,) which contained a numerous population, not a single house, not even a mosque, was left standing; and the proud citadel, erected upon a projecting eminence, so gallantly defended by a handful of men, now presents a shapeless mass of ruins. This, it is true, according to the laws of war, the Russians were justified in destroying;

but we are at a loss to conceive what can be urged in extenuation of the wanton demolition of the town, which ruined thousands of the unhappy people, and left them without a home—without a shelter.

A few houses and a mosque have been rebuilt, but the majority of the inhabitants still live in sheds erected within the blackened walls of their houses.

At Hirsova I engaged a boat to take me across the Danube to Galatz, having determined to return to Vienna, through Moldavia, the Buckowina, and Galicia, instead of Transylvania and Hungary, countries I had already in great part explored. I was the more solicitous to take this route, as the new roads made by the Austrian government in the Buckowina and Galicia offer every facility to the traveller; add to which, the inhabitants of Moldavia and the Austrian provinces, through which I must necessarily pass, are perfectly original in their manners, the countries are new to the research of the traveller, and the road is very little longer than that usually taken through Wallachia and Transylvania.

At Galatz (a town which I have already endeavoured to bring my reader acquainted with in my last work) I first beheld, since I left Asia, the *stars* which herald in the dawn of European civilization, in the form of custom-house officers, sanitary officers, police-officers, &c.

My passport having been demanded—a regulation altogether novel in this government—was produced, and transferred to a pair of tongs several yards in length, the officer entertaining a deep, and, it must be confessed, not unfounded horror of everything appertaining to a man who had just arrived from the city of the plague. That important document being found perfectly correct, we were conducted under the escort of a guard to the lazaretto, where every article of my luggage underwent a thorough fumigation; and when the medical officer had examined the state of our health, we were sentenced to fourteen days' quarantine, which I suppose was mitigated from twenty-one by the application to his conscience of a ducat.

Never shall I forget the ennui I experienced at this plague-preventing establishment. My bed

was composed of a straw mattress and a blanket; the charges for refreshments would have been less at the London Hotel at Vienna, so famous for the excellence of its appointments; while a soldier, who acted as guard and servant, watched my movements night and day, in order that I might not quit the precincts of my miserable cell. Books I had none; nor was I better off for society. I had, however, the consolation of being allowed writing materials, and learned, for the first time in my life, to estimate their full value to the prisoner.

That quarantine establishments are highly useful, inasmuch as they prevent, in a great measure, the introduction of pestilence into a country, there cannot be a doubt; but I cannot think so much rigour necessary on the part of the employées in their administration as was displayed in this of Moldavia; and surely the government might interfere to render the abode of the traveller more comfortable, particularly as he is obliged to pay a certain sum for the use of the apartment and the attendance of the guard during the time of his stay. They might also prevent

the extortions practised upon him by the restaurateur, and other little annoyances of a similar description. But when we remember that the selection of the officers for the government of the quarantine establishment has been vested by treaty in the Russian consul-general at Jassy, conjointly with the Prince of Moldavia, and that they are generally Russians, we can hardly wonder at the imposition, nor the degree of vulgar haughtiness exercised by the civil officers, so characteristic of these petty despots in their own country.

In fact, from this circumstance alone we must consider the situation of the prince of Moldavia as a mere sinecure, and that he is an instrument in the hands of the autocrat, for, having his frontiers guarded by his august protector, he is completely left without a will of his own. Hence we may regard the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia as entirely subject to Russian control, since the entrance to these provinces is watched over by Russian vigilance, in the form of establishments for the preservation of the public health, a vigilance which we know never sleeps whenever the interests of that power are concerned.

MOLDAVIAN PEASANTS.

CHAPTER XIV.

Journey from Galatz to Jassy—Roads in Moldavia—Posting—Aspect of the country—Jassy in its present state—The Hospodar Prince Stourdza—Hostility of the Boyars towards their prince—Their accusations against him before the deputies of Russia and Turkey.

I WAS not a little glad when I received a clean bill of health, obtained the necessary signatures to my passport, and had made arrangements with the postmaster for horses to take me to Jassy.

The carriage destined to convey me was not, to be sure, very comfortable, being little better than a common four-wheeled cart, drawn by two horses, and driven by a ragged postillion, dressed in a sheep-skin jacket, and a towering lamb-skin cap, of Tartar dimensions. A bundle of hay, placed in the middle, was the substitute for a cushion, upon which we were obliged to sit in a sort of Turkish position, the vehicle not affording sufficient space for any other.

Notwithstanding the road was very much out of order, in consequence of the late rains, I had no reason to complain, when this was taken into consideration, of the speed of the horses, or of the conduct of the drivers, who were both civil and attentive. I have called the beaten track we passed over, out of courtesy, a road! but truth to say, among the various signs of civilization I found in Moldavia on arriving at Galatz, a road was not included, these beaten tracks through the open country, similar to those I described in Bulgaria, being universal; and as they are never mended, they become in rainy weather a complete mass of mud, the carriage sinking to the axletree at every

step. Fortunately it was not our destiny to be left, as is sometimes the dilemma of a traveller, sticking in the mire; but from the rapid rate at which we were hurried on in our light vehicle, when the road would permit it, there was some danger of the axletree taking fire, which obliged the driver to descend every now and then, when he came to a village or a pool of water, to saturate the wheels. It must, however, be observed, that not a particle of iron is used in the construction of these most primitive chariots.

As in Russia, the whole charge for posting to the place of destination is paid at starting, for which a written acknowledgment is given, so that the traveller is not annoyed by being detained at each station to settle accounts, having no other trouble than to present a small donation, say a piastre (about ten-pence) at the end of each post to the driver.

My open Moldavian car, however incommodious, at least afforded me an opportunity of surveying the surrounding country. Beautifully undulating fields, here and there covered with wood, formed its general character; and though the trees

were in great part stripped of their foliage, they gave some variety to the landscape, and were for this purpose the more valuable on account of the almost total absence of villages; those through which we passed were, with their miserable population, thoroughly wretched, and this notwithstanding the fertility of the soil is perhaps not exceeded by any other country in Europe, and the climate favourable to the maturity of every production peculiar to a temperate clime.

Wherever the land is cultivated, the most abundant crops of wheat, maize, and other kinds of grain, are produced; and all the different species of European fruits usually found in such latitudes arrive at great perfection. The grapes, which sometimes in the vicinity of a village adorn the sunny slopes of the hills, would produce an excellent wine, were the natives better skilled in the art of making it: even with this disadvantage, the wines of Moldavia and Wallachia have already, owing to their fine flavour and strength, attained some reputation, and are much in demand in the neighbouring provinces, Bessarabia, the Buckowina, and Transylvania.

The Moldavians, in addition to their idle habits, and the total absence among them of any taste for the quiet retirement of domestic life, have become deplorably demoralized, which is referable in a great degree to the leaden rule of Turkey, and the rapacity of a long succession of Greek governors, appointed by that power, whose only study was to amass wealth by every possible means, however oppressive and tyrannical. To these causes may be added the exactions of the Russian government during its late military occupation of these principalities, which completely drained their resources. As I shall have occasion to refer to this subject in a future chapter, at present I shall merely say, that bands of robbers now scour the country in every direction, levying their illegal contributions alike on the peaceable villager and the unoffending traveller, and not unfrequently adding murder to robbery. The accounts I heard at Galatz of these depredators were anything but encouraging. However, I have not to record any act of molestation, as I arrived safely at Jassy in about twenty-four hours.

Few towns appear to greater advantage, when

viewed at a distance, than the capital of Moldavia. The environs, with their extensive gardens, are beautiful and picturesque; while the town being partly situated on a rising eminence, and partly in a pleasant valley, with its wide-spreading suburbs scattered about on the surrounding heights, and mingling with the pretty forms of the domes and spires, impresses the traveller with the idea that he is about to enter a very considerable city, rich and populous. But in these favourable anticipations, he will be miserably disappointed; and whatever may have been the former grandeur of Jassy, it is now reduced to a level with one of the wretched capitals of the east.

The streets, like the roads, are unpaved, except one or two of the principal, and these are merely boarded, a channel for conveying away the filth of the street being formed underneath; but, owing to the slovenliness of the inhabitants, and the entire absence, we presume, of any sanitary police to enforce cleanliness, it is suffered to accumulate for months, thus poisoning the atmosphere and engendering a miasma sufficient to create a pestilence.

We cannot, therefore, wonder that Jassy is a most unhealthy place; typhus, nervous, and tertian fevers prevailing alternately almost throughout the year. At this time the town was truly disagreeable in consequence of the heavy rain that was falling, it being impossible to pass along a single street without wading through a pool of mud, although a firm and durable material for paving may be found in almost every part of the principality, for Moldavia, unlike the monotonous plains of some parts of Wallachia, where not so much as a pebble is to be seen, abounds with stone, of which any other people would gladly avail themselves. Still, a wooden pavement, if kept in good repair, is not liable to any particular objection, as carriages roll over it with great rapidity, and it is certainly admirably calculated for a nervous invalid.

Notwithstanding that my picture of the capital of Moldavia may not be calculated to inspire any of my wandering compatriots with the desire of taking up a residence in it, still I think its reputation for insalubrity might tempt thither some of the disciples of Esculapius. Any of

these who may choose to make such a pilgrimage will be certain of finding plenty of rich patients in the Jews and boyars, and may confidently look forward to realizing a fortune in a few years. I can at least speak from experience, for during the two days I sojourned there I was absolutely besieged with applications for advice and medicine, as I never laid down my character of hakkim till I arrived in civilized Europe; not only did my passport indicate medicine to be my profession, but my servant Nathan everywhere industriously proclaimed the wonderful cures I had wrought in the Caucasus, and the number of antidotes I possessed against almost every disease!

However unfavourable the report which truth has obliged me to give of the once far-famed Jassiorum Municipium, many improvements are in contemplation, and some in progress; we see here and there a pretty elegant mansion just erected, or in the hands of the builder. There is also the new palace of the reigning prince in a very forward state; but as most of these stately

structures are in immediate juxta-position with some miserable cabin, they reminded me of the Turkish tacticoes, where a giant and a dwarf may be seen marching side by side. In short, the whole province, with its capital, presents a picture of civilization struggling with barbarism. However, any appearance of improvement in this long-neglected country must be hailed by the philanthropist with satisfaction. It is in contemplation to pave the town, and roads are actually being made in the environs, which are intended to be conducted through the interior of the province. The little army, also, officered by Russians, is daily drilled according to the most approved system of discipline, patronized by the court of St. Petersburg.

The prince is but ill-seconded in his administration by his nobility, the proud boyars, who, it is said, owing to their immense influence in the country, are enabled to throw insurmountable obstacles in the way of any measure that may militate against their interests, or run counter to their prejudices. But from all I have been able

to glean, the slavish submission of the hospodar Michael Stourdza to the will of the protector, Nicholas, his insatiable avarice, his utter disregard to the interests and independence of his country, are the real grounds of their dislike, and have been the means of arraying against him every patriotic man in the principality.

Only a month or two previous to my arrival, the hostility of the boyars was carried to such a height that, at a general assembly of the representatives of the principality, he was declared by a large majority incompetent to administer the affairs of his country; and in order to eject him from his high trust as hospodar, he was not only publicly accused before the deputies of the protectorates, Russia and Turkey, of several grave misdemeanors, but every expedient was resorted to which their influence in the country could command, for the purpose of procuring his expulsion from the throne. Whether guilty or not of the charges, the revolutionary principle could not be recognised, for the delinquent was a sovereign; the precedent might be dangerous to the repose of nations, and would certainly be disapproved by

every potentate in Christendom,—for might not the petty states of Germany and Italy follow the example? As might be expected, the accusation had no other effect than to establish the prince more firmly on his throne; while the boyars, finding themselves too weak to contend against a jury of potentates, have some retired to their estates, there to brood in silence over their discontent, and others, less patriotic in their feelings, now court the smiles of the very man they were so anxious to depose.

Without entering into the merits or demerits of the accusation, which would only lead to a lengthened discussion, uninteresting to the general reader, we shall merely notice one, among many others, advanced against his highness,—we allude to his ill-judged clemency towards a malefactor. Surely every impartial man must deem it highly impolitic in a ruler, and highly unjust towards the community at large, to permit a notorious robber, the record of whose crimes would fill a volume, to escape with impunity, for no other reason than that years of successful depredations had enabled him to pay several

hundred thousand piastres, to be distributed among the poor,—a very small portion of which, say the enemies of the hospodar, was appropriated to the purpose specified. Be this as it may, could not the poor have been benefited by any other plan except cheating the gallows of its right? Besides, what has been the consequence of this absurd act of mercy? The vulgar, who are ever ready to sympathize with crime when it is united to daring bravery, have elevated the robber to a hero; by and bye songs will be sung to his praise, and his deeds will be recorded to posterity, like those of Robin Hood: but this is not all; since that event, highway robbers have multiplied to such a degree that, in many parts of the principality, it is absolutely necessary for a traveller to be accompanied by an escort of Cossacks.

CHAPTER XV.

Jews in Jassy—Description of a Jewish marriage feast—Moldavian peasants—Their dress and external appearance—Gypsies—Some account of that migratory race—Society at Jassy.

I TOOK up my quarters at a Jewish hotel, for Nathan was determined that his brethren alone should benefit during our tour, as he always selected their houses in preference for rest and refreshment. That he acted very wisely in this proceeding must be acknowledged, for though the sons of Israel are undoubtedly inferior in point of cleanliness to the inhabitants of the highly civilized countries of Europe, yet in these benighted provinces they ascend in the same ratio.

In an hotel kept by an Israelite you are at least certain of being civilly treated, and of getting something to eat, if you exhibit to their delighted

eyes a well-filled purse. As for beds, they are not to be found in the hotels of these countries, whether kept by Jew or Christian, that comfort of life constituting part of the baggage of the traveller; but as I had been so long unaccustomed to one, I reposed quite as well on a leathern pillow and a plank,—at least, I had the satisfaction of knowing them to be clean.

In truth, I had become so accustomed to the Jews and their manner of living during my excursions in the East, where they were invariably my bankers, money-changers, and cicerones, that I found myself with them completely at home; and as they invariably speak a dialect of the German,* we had always a medium of communication unknown to the rest of the natives. From the frequent intercourse I had with these people, I should be inclined to think that no sect whatever are more attentive to the duties of their religion; besides morning and evening devotions, I never

* The circumstance of the Jews speaking a mongrel German, in addition to their own Hebrew, in almost every part of the world, is a fact for which I could never obtain a satisfactory explanation, either from themselves or the Germans.

saw them break bread without offering up a silent prayer; while, in spite of centuries of continued persecution, they exhibit the singular spectacle of a people retaining their religious customs, manners, and individuality as a nation.

The Jews of these provinces are more liberal than those settled in Turkey, who do not in general receive a stranger of a different faith into their houses; however, this regulation having been once dispensed with, it was only necessary to say that we had broken bread with Ben Solomon or Ben Abraham, of this or that town, to be certain of a kind reception.

More than one-third of the population of Jassy are Jews; and as Nathan had found some sort of a hundredth cousin among them, the marriage of whose son was about to be celebrated, I received an invitation to be present. The festival was held at the house of a rich fur merchant, the father of the young lady; and although he was considered extremely parsimonious, yet on this occasion his expenditure must have been most lavish: the long oaken tables, with covers for about fifty persons, were loaded with silver, and

every delicacy that could gratify the palate of a Hebrew.

It was not the antique forms of the plate, heir-looms in the family for centuries, nor the cookery and confectionary so peculiar to this people, that interested me, so much as the singularity of the whole spectacle.

Previous to entering the *sal à manger*, the guests diligently washed their hands; and when the whole party was assembled around the dining table, a few seconds were passed, as usual, in silent prayer; then, after every justice was rendered to an excellent dinner, we were served with light Greek and Moldavian wines, sherbet, and a species of hot weak punch.

When the feast was concluded, the bride and bridegroom made their appearance. The young lady was exceedingly handsome, and though only twelve years of age, appeared nearly full-grown; we cannot say so much for her affianced, who, in addition to being short and ill-favoured, was deformed; but he was very rich, and had travelled from Lemberg in Galicia for the purpose of allying himself and his fortunes with one of the love-

liest daughters of his tribe. Immediately after they entered the room, a patriarch, distinguished by the length of his beard and venerable appearance, stood up, and delivered a long oration in Hebrew on the duties of a married life, during which the men enveloped themselves in the species of shawl they use in the synagogue. This was succeeded by the most boisterous mirth, singing, music, and dancing, which continued throughout the night. The feasting and rejoicing, I understood, was to be repeated for three successive days and nights.

The women, for the most part pretty, were much improved by their half-oriental dress, particularly the velvet tiara, set with pearls and precious stones, which encircled the head. I was assured that this favourite ornament of a Jewish woman in these provinces often costs a sum not less than five hundred pounds, and descends from generation to generation, as an heir-loom. In addition to this, they wore a sort of gold lace stomacher, set also with pearls and precious stones, to say nothing of necklaces, bracelets, rings, &c.; consequently, each fair dame carried

on her person trinkets sufficient to stock a jeweller's shop!

The young and unmarried women were more simply attired, having no other ornaments than those given them by nature, while their fine long hair, curiously plaited, nearly reached their heels, the Hebrew women resembling those of other oriental nations in the luxuriance of their tresses.

The men, who here still retain their eastern costume, were habited in high fur caps, and long silk pelisses, confined around the waist with scarlet shawls; and as the majority wore long flowing beards, the whole assembly had a novel and picturesque effect.

Jassy offers but little to interest the traveller, with the exception of a glance at its motley inhabitants. There are Jews, Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, in their appropriate costume; we also see occasionally a boyar from the interior, who has not yet renounced his national dress, in his long fur mantle; this was the more novel on account of the fur being worn inwards, and the outside, especially the back, collar, and sleeves, gaily embroidered with various devices, such as the Greek

cross, flowers, &c., in all the colours of the rainbow; nor is his head dress, consisting of an immense turban of black Astrakan fur, at least a yard in circumference, less singular in appearance. It would also be most uncourteous not to mention the neat and very becoming fur jackets generally worn by the fairer part of the population: but it is the wild looking peasants, their black hair streaming loosely over their sun-burnt countenance, habited in greasy sheep-skin jackets and caps, their sandals of untanned leather, made from the skin of a goat and fastened with ropes, always without stockings or cravat, and frequently without even a cap, that most arrests the attention of the traveller.

The appearance of the peasant women was in no respect superior to their lords, — squalid, miserable, and dirty, they looked like priestesses of poverty, to whom a supply of shoes and handkerchiefs would be indeed a charity.

The dress, however, of the peasants affords a striking instance of the fallacy of the supposed truism that everything in this world is mutable, the form of their habiliments being, with little

variation, similar to the costume of the peasantry of the Roman empire. The preservation of this costume, and the corrupted dialect of the Latin spoken by the inhabitants of Wallachia and Moldavia, after the lapse of so many centuries, would alone prove, even if we had no historical testimony, that the majority of the people of these countries may trace their origin from the Romans.

Among the other inhabitants of the principality we may reckon the tribes of wandering gypsies, who must be very numerous, for they are to be seen in every part of the country, and are said to amount to a hundred and fifty thousand. This migratory race, called here Tzygani, whose origin has never yet been satisfactorily traced, are remarkable, as in other countries, for their robust constitution, fine features, and a complexion which neither the fogs of Great Britain, the burning suns of Africa and Asia, nor the snows of Siberia, have been able to change. As little effect has been produced upon their habits, manners, and customs by the industry, civilization, and religion, of the varied countries in which they dwell. To Christianity or Mahometanism they

are alike insensible, obstinately resisting every attempt to convert them either to the one or the other. Hardened by incessant exposure to the variations of the climate, added to their own natural robustness, they are capable of bearing great fatigue; hence they might exercise any profession or trade, however laborious; instead of which, the industry of the men is no better employed than in mending old pots and pans, and the women content themselves with the still less creditable occupation of foretelling future events to such as will listen to them; but these avocations serve them as a pretence for strolling about the country and exercising their real trade—thieving.

Here, as elsewhere, they speak a jargon of their own, and tell you they are the people of Pharaoh. The Moldavian government, like every other, aware of their evil propensities, without encouraging them to settle, tolerate them; and, as in other countries, they contrive to maintain themselves without becoming a charge to the community. They are held in the most supreme contempt by the inhabitants, who consider them little better than brutes—below even their old tyrants,

the infidel Turks—very pagans, who neither worship God, nor acknowledge any government, or superior, but their own. However rigorous may be the weather, they encamp in the open fields, and like the Tartars and Turkomans in Turkey, their tents are arranged in a semi-circular form, that of the chief being in the centre. It is only those who pay an annual tribute to the government, that is, a specific sum for each male arrived at maturity, that are allowed to pursue their wandering life, numbers being claimed by the boyars as slaves, who employ them as domestic servants about the kitchen, or as labourers in the fields.

The Greek Arnouts, in their picturesque costume, are here the police—a very fine body of men, but most merciless tyrants. I witnessed an instance of their brutality, during the time my passport was being signed at the town hall. A starving peasant had been taken in the act of making too free with a loaf in a baker's window; an Arnout was sent for, who, seizing the poor wretch by the hair of the head, dragged him,

screaming most piteously, before the magistrate; every feeble attempt he made to escape not only provoked a blow from the Herculean islander sufficient to fell an ox, but his hair was torn from his head. Without either trial or witnesses, he was instantly condemned to receive twenty strokes from the whip of a Cossack, a weapon from its great size and weight capable of inflicting a most severe punishment, when wielded by a powerful executioner, which happened to be the case in the present instance. The unfortunate culprit was not only struck across the neck and shoulders, but on the head: then, covered with wounds and bruises, he was kicked out of the yard into the street.

I endeavoured to prevail upon the judge to mitigate his sentence, which only excited a contemptuous sneer from him and the bystanders; but when I threw the poor wretch a handful of piastres, the greater number laughed heartily, most probably at the folly of a well-dressed man expressing sympathy for a miserable object, shivering in rags, and covered with dirt. The

unhappy being himself was not insensible to gratitude; kindness must indeed have been a stranger to him, for he threw himself on his face, and repeatedly kissed my feet.

I returned to my inn, internally pitying the poor peasantry, thus subjected to the control of a government which, with all its pretensions to civilization, is still barbarous in many of its acts, and will require a century before it can take a place among the enlightened countries of Europe.

Jassy, like the towns in Russia of a similar description and standing, abounds with vehicles of every description; the droschke is that most generally used, and no man possessing any rank in society is without one,—those among the better classes who cannot well afford it denying themselves every comfort of domestic life to procure this luxury, in which they exhibit themselves, decked in as much finery as their means will allow them to purchase.

That a carriage, in a town and country where it is impossible to move abroad in wet weather without being ankle-deep in mud, is highly desirable, there can be no doubt; but still, the good

people of these provinces may be sometimes mistaken in estimating a man's rank by his equipage: besides, what is the luckless traveller to do in a town like this, where not a single vehicle can be hired, and he wishes, as I did, to pay a few visits to some of the boyars to whom I had recommendatory letters? I extricated myself from this dilemma by writing to them; and as my new friends were men of the world, having travelled in various parts of Europe, they had no objection to receive, most courteously, a man without a carriage; but I suppose in order to satisfy the prejudices of their untravelled friends, they took care to send an equipage for me. Nay, they even procured for me a place in the caleche of an officer who was on the eve of departure for Czarnowitz, the first town in the Austrian Buckowina, for which accommodation I was glad to pay the expense of posting—in these countries a mere trifle, a pair of horses for a hundred miles costing little more than thirty shillings. The charges at the little inns on the road, also, in a country where luxury is unknown except in the houses of the wealthy boyars, were equally reasonable, the

mamàlinga being in general the only food to be procured. This dish, which is by no means contemptible, is made from maize flour, sometimes by boiling it with milk or water, like the Italian polenta, and at other times by making it into a pilaff with minced meat, when it is extremely palatable, and by far the best method of preparing it.

That the mamalinga is highly nutritious is evidenced by the good looks, great strength, robust frames, and activity, of the agricultural peasants, —it being the principal, and indeed we may say the only food, of the majority of the working classes; and however ragged and wretched they may be in their apparel, the inhabitants of these principalities are a fine, well-grown race of men.

CHAPTER XVI.

Departure from Jassy—Desolate state of the country—Great fertility of the soil—Resources of the country—Demoralization of the people—Causes of this—Reflections on the present state of Moldavia.

On leaving Jassy, we were fortunate in the weather; a frost having succeeded a heavy fall of rain, the road was in capital order, and we rolled onward with great rapidity. As in Russia, it appeared as if the postillions were running a race against time; and although the horses were small, and in appearance half-famished, they generally went at the rate of from twelve to fourteen wersts an hour.

The landscape in the immediate vicinity of the town retained the character of beauty and fertility to which I before alluded, on entering Jassy from Galatz. The environs, laid out in gardens,

vineyards, and orchards, exhibited some appearance of careful cultivation; while here and there an elegant country-house, belonging to a rich boyar, gave picturesque effect to a scene which must be truly delightful in summer. But these pleasing objects once passed, the same aspect of neglect, the same want of population, everywhere prevailed.

A few spots were here and there cultivated, for the immediate subsistence of the inhabitants; but the country for the most part remained neglected and desolate: withered grass, of several feet high, intermingled with thistles, and other weeds of gigantic height, lay rotting, a stranger alike to the sickle, or cattle to consume it. The soil, which is extremely rich, is everywhere of the same dark colour as we see in the most fertile districts of Hungary,—a soil which never requires manure, and, from its peculiar qualities, scarcely any labour in its cultivation. And how delightful were the prospects in every direction! At one time our route lay through a dense forest of splendid trees, then along the banks of a charming lake, at least ten miles in length; and we rarely see a country

more extensively irrigated; in addition to several springs and rivulets, there is the Danube and the Sereth, together with the Moldau, or Moldava, that runs through the whole principality, and the Pruth, which separates it from Russo-Bessarabia.

These springs, lakes, and rivers, not only fertilize the country, but are sources of great revenue to the proprietors, from the immense quantities of leeches they furnish, which are transported to every capital in Europe.

With all these advantages of soil, climate, and situation,—with the Danube navigable for all the purposes of commerce to every part of the world, —the greater part of Moldavia is still in a state of nature; and even where it is inhabited, we rarely, except in the vicinity of towns, which are "few and far between," see a trace of European culture and neatness. If we survey the two principalities in conjunction, the immense tract of country they comprise, their extraordinary fertility, their navigable rivers, their mines, &c., what may they not become in process of time, if good government and wholesome institutions lend their aid in advancing their prosperity, when

we remember that the entire population at present is considerably under four millions, whereas, at a moderate calculation, the soil is capable of supporting four times the number.

To ameliorate the condition of countries so long subjected to the leaden rule of the Ottoman Porte, to the oppressive government of rapacious hospodars, and latterly to the devastations and excesses of the Russian occupation army, is a work of no little difficulty. There is wanting the hand of the enlightened patriot, uninfluenced by any selfish motive,—the intelligence of a wise lawgiver,—and the pruning-knife of a judicious reformer. Independently of the numerous evils to rectify in every branch of the administration, the lower orders have become so brutalized, from a long state of vassalage and the utter insecurity of property, as to be almost insensible to the hardships of their condition, while the better classes are lamentably demoralized.

The form of worship professed by the inhabitants of these principalities (the Greek church) appears to have had but little influence in checking the growth of immorality in the one, or in enlight-

ening the ignorance of the other. The want of a virtuous, well-educated, and enlightened priesthood, has also been sensibly felt. Perhaps in no other country of Europe is the sacred tie of marriage less respected, or violated with less remorse. Neither in any, not even in bigoted Spain and Portugal, are the religious opinions of the people founded on such senseless superstitions. Among the hosts of saints and angels to be propitiated, the Almighty seems to be entirely forgotten. Absolution, and the payment of a fee to the priest, relieves the conscience of a man from the weight of any crime, however revolting, however unnatural. Miracles are believed to be performed by the images of saints. Holy water is not only used as an antidote against the evil-eye and witchcraft, but against the plague and every other disease; while the divine power of the Virgin is regarded as equal to that of the Saviour; and if to these we add their belief in goblins, apparitions, witchcraft, and similar nonsense, how many generations are yet to pass away before this people can rank among the enlightened nations of Europe!

Notwithstanding we cannot but admit the evil tendencies of many of the superstitious observances belonging to the Greek form of worship, it must, in fairness, be conceded, that some of its ceremonies are imposing, and well adapted to strike the imagination with awe and reverence, while not a few of its institutions are really admirable. Take, for instance, the established ceremonial for the performance of public service: within the walls of the sacred edifice there is no distinction of persons,—no splendid seat is reserved for rank or wealth,—no pew, hung with velvet and gold, receives the princely devotee. Nor will it yield, in the magnificence of its rites, even to gorgeous catholicism; and he who has once heard the *Gospodin po milóe* performed in any of the great cathedrals of St. Petersburg or Moscow will never forget it, but confess that not even the far-famed choir of St. Peter's at Rome can surpass its melodious strains. Then the splendour of the public service is admirably calculated to captivate the minds of the vulgar. There is the smoking incense — the blazing torches; and when the great folding-doors of the

ayanastasis, within which the mysteries are prepared for public service, are thrown open, and the officiating *papa* (priest) is seen, clothed in his embroidered robes, elevating the sacred host to the view of his congregation, and crying with a loud voice, "Peace be with you!" the most solemn feelings are excited. At that moment the assembled multitude prostrate themselves to the earth till the holy emblems are no longer visible, which is announced by a burst of heavenly music.

If the traveller, in passing through the country, had no other causes of complaint than the immorality and superstition of the people, however much he might deplore their existence, he could not be personally a sufferer; but unfortunately our censures cannot end here, for bands of robbers prowl over the whole land, instances of whose depredations and atrocities we were repeatedly told by the landlords of the little inns where we stopped for refreshment or to change horses.

The Moldavian boyars, however, will not admit that these acts of violence are altogether

perpetrated by the natives of their principality, for, say they, our country being situated on the confines of Turkey, Russo-Bessarabia, the Austrian Buckowina, and Transylvania, the free-booters of these provinces have only to cross a frontier but ill guarded, and levy their contributions with impunity. It is true, the Austrian and Russian governments act with far more vigour in their police regulations than the feeble prince of Moldavia; consequently the danger is greatest in his territories; add to which, there is so little traffic or intercourse carried on between the inhabitants, that they rarely leave their respective homes, and the traveller may journey a whole day without meeting a single human being, except those belonging to some little village or hamlet.

With the intention of protecting the traveller on the high road, the government has recently established a police of mounted Cossacks, but these have not hitherto been of the slightest service, either in preventing crime or in taking any of the principal delinquents. Of their determination not to become actors in any dangerous ad-

venture I can speak from experience, for we invariably found, when they perceived us, or indeed on hearing the noise of our carriage, that they fled into the thickets. Whether we were bandits to be apprehended, or travellers to be protected, evidently did not seem a matter of any concern to them, so long as they were secure from danger.

Notwithstanding the unfavourable accounts given us of the insecurity of travelling in Moldavia, we arrived safely at Boyan, the first station in the Austrian Buckowina, without molestation. We had, however, taken good care to present a most formidable front, being every one of us armed to the teeth; and only once, on passing through the thick forest which separates Moldavia from the Buckowina, did the horizon seem even clouded with danger, as we there met with half-a-dozen most bandit-looking fellows on horseback; they passed on, however, and did not attempt to interrupt us.

Without admitting or contradicting the assertion of our friends the boyars, that the natives of Moldavia are not the real delinquents, it is impos-

sible to deny their general demoralization; like the people of other countries who live under a weak government, and submit to the guidance of an idle ignorant priesthood, they exhibit all the vices of civilized life, without its redeeming tendencies. Of the truth of this we have striking exemplifications in Spain, Portugal, and Italy. A man may travel with far less risk among the most barbarous hordes of the wildest parts of Asia, than in any one of these countries. The oriental tribes who still pursue the roving habits of their fathers, preserve their simple manners, regard luxury as a vice, and practise the virtues of primitive ages—hospitality to the wanderer, and incorruptible fidelity to the man who has once broken bread with them; even among the most barbarous and predatory, the countenance of a chief, or the payment of a tribute, is sufficient to ensure the safety of a traveller.

Human nature is the same under all circumstances, but it is modified by the influence of religion, the form of government, customs, and education: the virtue of the roving tribes of Asia is not assailed by wealth and luxury; having

but few wants, money is to them valueless. Neither are they driven to desperation by the exactions of an imperious lord, nor reduced to beggary by excessive taxation. Even the half-civilized hordes of Turkey, who suffer not a little from the rapacity of unprincipled pachas, from their simple manner of living, which contracts their desires within very narrow limits, seldom resort to acts of violence on the traveller in order to procure the means of luxurious subsistence, and this notwithstanding the country may be said to be without a police, and the arm of the executive government too weak to be dreaded. Not so in Europe; there the increasing desire of all classes to acquire wealth, with the temptations of the splendid living of the rich ever alluring them, it is only in those well-governed countries where the strong arm of the law is sufficiently powerful to repress the evil inclinations of the mass who, idle and profligate, would prey upon their fellows, that the property of the traveller is secure from spoliation.

CHAPTER XVII.

Historical sketch of Moldavia and Wallachia—Destructive results of Turkish rule—Consequences of Russian intervention and occupation of the principalities—Excesses of the Russian troops — Hostile feelings of the boyars towards their protector—Remarks of a boyar upon the present state of his country and its government.

After these observations upon the actual state of the inhabitants of this principality, and which every traveller, however short his stay in the country may be, or however rapid his journey, must acknowledge to be correct, we will take a cursory view of the principal causes that have contributed to reduce the country to its present debased state; and these will be better understood if we give a brief sketch of the history of the two principalities, particularly as they are but little known, and from their position highly interesting to the commercial world.

A traveller who may reside in a country even for months cannot, if left to his own resources, enter minutely into its statistical or commercial details; he can in fact do little more than picture the manners and customs of the people: and as my rapid tour through Moldavia and Wallachia, first in a steam voyage down the Danube, when I visited several of their largest commercial towns, and now through the interior of Moldavia, obliges me to acknowledge myself of this class of travellers, I have therefore addressed myself for information to other sources. For the statistical and commercial account I am indebted to an interesting manuscript, furnished me by Mr. Harbottle, of the house of Bell & Co., Bucharest, who, from his acquaintance with the form of government, from his extensive commercial transactions with the people, and his familiarity with their manners, customs, and language, is perfectly qualified to give a correct representation.

From that gentleman's manuscript, my own observations, and the information I received from several patriotic boyars, I have gleaned a variety

of interesting matter, a part of which I have already woven into the preceding chapter; while the statistical and commercial details, interesting to the man of business, I have subjoined at the end of the volume.

The whole of the immense district lying between the river Dniester (which takes its rise in the Carpathian mountains in Galicia, and falls into the Euxine at Akerman,) and the Lower Danube, Hungary, and Transylvania, was originally called the kingdom of Dacia, having been conquered by Trajan; Roman colonies were founded, the barbarous hordes were in a great measure civilized, and the people to this day retain in their language and many of their customs traces of their former connexion with the conquerors of the world.

In all probability they were Scythians, for we are informed by Roman writers that the country of which they had taken possession was without houses, and the people wandered from place to place with their flocks and herds, and lived in covered carts, from which circumstance the Romans gave them the name of Hamaxobii.

On the decline of the Roman empire, Dacia fell successively into the hands of the Goths, Huns, Tartars, and other barbarous hordes, till about the thirteenth century, when it ceased to be called a kingdom, having then been divided under two powerful chiefs,—that part called Wallachia taking its name from the Wallachs, a tribe whose leader became the sovereign of the principality; while Moldavia borrows its appellation from the Moldau, a river that runs through the principality and falls into the Lower Danube.

Notwithstanding the separation of Dacia into two principalities, the natives continued to preserve, with little variation, the same form of government, the same religion and language, and in the present day differ but little from each other in any of their national characteristics; nor do we find that they have ever been in active hostility with each other. Formidable from their union of interests, their alliance was courted by the kings of Hungary and Poland; and they continued to preserve their character as independent states until the conquests of the Mahometans on the Euxine and the Lower Danube.

Finding themselves unable to resist the torrent of the infidels, and deserted by Hungary and Poland, they consented to become tributary to the Turkish Sultans, annexing to their submission the following conditions, by no means dishonourable to them as a nation :—

" The undisturbed exercise of their religion (the Greek), and their own form of government and institutions, were to be guaranteed. They were declared free to make peace or war with any power not in hostilities with the Ottoman Porte. No mosques were to be erected in the country; and any native who should abjure the Christian religion for Islamism forfeited his birthright and paternal inheritance."

In return for these privileges they agreed to pay an annual sum to the Ottoman Porte, and to sell to that power, when demanded, the surplus produce of the soil.

The Moldavians and Wallachians continued to enjoy these advantages, with some modifications, till the reign of Sultan Achmet, about the beginning of the eighteenth century. That monarch, under the pretence, ill or well founded, that the

reigning princes of these principalities had facilitated the invasion of Turkey by Russia, under Peter II., deprived the inhabitants of the right of electing their own rulers, arbitrarily deposed the reigning princes, and subjected the country to every species of extortion and degradation.

From this time it became the practice of the Turkish Sultans to farm the principalities to the highest bidder, generally a Greek of the Fanar, who assumed the title of Hospodar; and in the same proportion that they wrung contributions from the inhabitants was the favour they enjoyed with the Porte. We cannot therefore feel surprised that countries so long exposed to the rapacity of foreign harpies, free to commit any act of tyranny, however oppressive, if the coffers of the Sultan were but filled, sunk to the lowest depths of poverty; while the unhappy peasants, having no stake whatever in existence beyond their daily bread, and being accustomed to blows and every description of ill treatment, became little better than animals attached to the soil that nourished them.

At length the Greek insurrection broke out, and the declining state of the Turkish empire emboldened the inhabitants of the principalities (secretly encouraged by Russia) to attempt the recovery of their lost independence; the result is a matter of history. If the spirited attempt of the people to deliver themselves from oppression met with a severe repulse, it had, however, the effect of extorting from the Ottoman Porte several important concessions.

From this period the principalities began to recover in some degree from the tyrannous misrule of more than a century. The privilege of being governed by a native prince of their own choice was restored; a spirit of improvement, nationality, and industry, developed itself; they acquired a representative government,—that is to say, a general assembly for each principality, formed of a certain number of senators, was constituted, in whom was vested the right of electing the reigning prince, and of examining the acts of the government; while freedom of commerce, liberty of conscience, the responsibility of ministers, the establishment of a quarantine and a sanitary cordon to

protect the public health, the organization of an army on the European footing, together with the erection of civil and criminal tribunals for the better administration of justice, were among its separate articles. In short, nothing less was contemplated than the entire regeneration of the country. All Europe admired the disinterestedness of the court of St. Petersburg, and the extraordinary liberality of the young Czar! who was announced to be the principal instrument that wrung from the Ottoman Porte so many important concessions, and who so generously constituted himself the protector of the principalities. The delight of the boyars was enthusiastic; the peasants were wild with joy at the prospect of so much happiness—at the golden age then about to dawn upon their fatherland; while strangers from the adjoining provinces, attracted by the great fertility of the soil, and a desire to live under a government that promised so many blessings, became naturalized, and purchased land, which had the effect of raising it considerably in value. At the same time, merchants and manufacturers from various parts of Europe were tra-

velling over the country to select positions adapted for commercial speculation and the erection of manufactories. Brailow, in Wallachia, and Galatz, in Moldavia, situated on the Danube, were intended to be as great rivals in trade as Genoa and Venice, in the days of their power and prosperity.

How delusive are the hopes of man! How fallacious the expectations of nations! The ink of the treaty with the Ottoman Porte, and the Court of St. Petersburg, which guaranteed a constitution that promised so much good, was scarcely dry, when the Russian troops began to cross the Pruth! From that moment these poor people were taught to estimate at its proper value the protection of the Czar.

To enter into the various details, the complicated intrigues, by which the Court of St. Petersburg contrived to further its own interests in each separate branch of the administration, and render nugatory every article of the constitution, would alone fill a volume. Under the mask of philanthropy, and a desire to rescue its co-religionists from the oppressive rule of Turkey, the real intentions of that clever cabinet were concealed from

deluded Europe; and when it was too late, the principalities found, when the curtain was drawn, that two despots instead of one appeared on the stage to rivet still more firmly the chains that enslaved them.

We have already stated, when alluding to the quarantine establishment at Galatz, that the Russian government holds the key of the frontiers in virtue of that clause of the constitution which says that the inspector-general of all the quarantines in the principalities shall be nominated by the prince, conjointly with the consul-general of Russia.

It was also stipulated that the decrees of the general assembly of the nation, even though approved by the reigning prince, should not have the force of law, unless sanctioned by the protecting powers, Russia and Turkey; poor Turkey is already fast sinking beneath the weight of this burdensome protection, and Europe has not now to learn that protection, in the Russian vocabulary, is synonymous with anticipated possession. Hence these fine countries, with all their natural advantages, a soil richly fertile, virgin forests, rivers which furnish pure gold, with mines of silver, iron,

copper, and quicksilver, to which may be added a commanding position, that enables them to communicate by means of the Danube with Hungary and Germany on the one side, and on the other with the Euxine and the Mediterranean, which opens a channel to the whole commercial world, are likely to become attached to the most grasping power existing, unless the great powers interfere to prevent it. Hence, instead of enjoying the constitution guaranteed by their pretended protector, instead of advancing in civilization, industry, and commerce, till they took a rank among the well-ordered states of Europe, these principalities are bowed down beneath the iron sceptre of a power determinately opposed to all liberal institutions,—all general amelioration.

The reigning princes of Moldavia and Wallachia are mere puppets, obliged to obey unresistingly every mandate of the high and mighty ruler of sixty millions of people, however despotic it may be, however arbitrary, however inimical to the interests of their country.

As a natural consequence of the imperial will of the protector, the whole of the administration is in the hands of the Russians or their friends.

Every patriotic boyar who still preserves his character for integrity, and resists the seductions of bribery, honours, and jewelled crosses, is certain to be excluded from holding any office under government; while those who are bankrupts in fortune and character are promoted to places of the highest trust, and loaded with decorations.

But these are not the only evils inflicted on these ill-used principalities: were they even at this moment free, whole generations must pass away before the protection of Russia can be forgotten by the inhabitants, particularly the late military occupation of the country by the locust-like armies of that unprincipled power.

The details I received of that reign of terror, which, from want of space, I can merely glance at, were revolting in the extreme, and comprise an abuse of arbitrary authority, enforced by the bayonet, seldom or never practised by any power, even the most barbarous, in the land of an ally. These facts, which are not only openly alluded to by every boyar and peasant in the country not in the interest of the protector, but by the natives of the adjoining provinces, in the Austrian Buckowina, in Hungary, and Transylvania, are dis-

graceful to Russia as a nation, and are as little known to the free countries of Europe as if they related to the interior of Africa. For this she may thank despotic Austria, and the absence of a free press in Germany, which tacitly encourage her to demoralize and impoverish all those countries she has marked for her own. A little later, in all probability, Austria herself may be the sufferer. Hungary is a fine country, and as it joins Wallachia, she may find it necessary to chastise the natives for the well-known sympathy they have evinced and continue to manifest towards the Poles; once demoralized, there will be no difficulty in numbering it among the other provinces subjected to her protection!

But to return to the military occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia. It appears, during the late war between Turkey and Russia, when the latter power, as a friendly ally, held military possession of the principalities under consideration, that on the entrance of the troops a commission was established, composed of several Russian superior officers and a few boyars, for the purpose of providing for the wants of the army,

amounting to nearly two hundred thousand, with its train of baggage-waggons, horses, artillery, &c.

It is not the provisioning the troops of which we would complain, nor of the acts of the commissioners, however arbitrary and oppressive, nor of the brutal soldiery who enforced the demands at the point of the bayonet, nor of the sufferings of the unhappy peasants, who, like beasts of burden, were compelled to transport forage and provisions, not only through their own land, but to different parts of Turkey, where the Russian troops had penetrated,—all this, however bad, was but the natural result of circumstances; but it is against the Czar and his government, against a power calling itself civilized, which ruined an entire country, and reduced the population, by famine, disease, and ill-usage, one-fourth of its original amount, that our censures must be directed.

Vain would be any attempt to convey in words an idea of the deplorable state of these provinces at that period, so often described to me by those who had been eye-witnesses. Drained, exhausted, pillaged by the Turks, whose policy it was to de-

stroy whatever means of subsistence might avail the enemy; as might be expected, in a short time every article of provisions increased ten-fold in price, till at length, the hungry army devoured every thing within its reach. In some districts, the unfortunate peasants, suffering all the horrors of famine, were compelled to support life upon wild herbs, the barks of trees, and similar unnutritious substances, but which only protracted their wretched existence for a few weeks, as disease was certain to ensue, which soon terminated fatally. Even a supply of corn sent them by the benevolent inhabitants of the neighbouring Austrian provinces was seized by the Russian soldiers after crossing the frontier, thus depriving the famishing peasants of their last resource.

Those who are acquainted with the elements of which a Russian army is composed will not feel surprised at the brutal acts of violence recorded of the Cossacks, nor at the utter heartlessness displayed by the commissaries, to which we may add that the army in Turkey at that time was suffering the severest privations; consequently the demands for provisions were incessant, and the

orders of the government peremptory that supplies should be forwarded at any sacrifice;—an army upon whose existence at that moment the honour, nay, perhaps the fate of the empire, depended, for had Turkey triumphed, of which there was every prospect previous to the arrival of provisions for the troops, how different would have been the attitude of the autocrat at present among the powers of Europe.

In every point of view the fall of Turkey must be regarded by the inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia as an event of vital importance, for had she triumphed, the principalities would again have passed beneath her iron rule, while the circumstance of having provided the enemy with supplies, however arbitrary might have been the mandate which enforced it, would have furnished a sufficient pretext for the Turks to wreak their vengeance upon the devoted country.

A deliverance won by the arms of Russia was most industriously blazoned throughout Europe by the hireling writers of that power. The Czar was hailed as the saviour of the principalities; his restoration to them of the important towns,

Guirgewo, Brailow, and Tourno, formerly occupied by the Turks, was lauded as an act of the highest disinterestedness and magnanimity; but on the subject of the ten millions of ducats in specie, and provisions, furnished by the impoverished inhabitants to their ally, of the thousands of victims to disease, famine, and ill-usage, consequent on the occupation of their land by their problematical friends, the strictest silence was maintained.

"Although," said a boyar to me, "our country was reduced to the verge of ruin, still we considered ourselves fortunate in escaping the thraldom of our old tyrants, and from the great fertility of the soil, and the possession of a constitution that guaranteed our liberties, we looked towards the future with confidence and hope. How illusive were our anticipations! From the moment we were cursed with the protection of Russia,—from the moment that power interfered in the administration of our affairs, every measure adopted has been subsidiary to her views and interests; but this is not all; the country has been inundated with Russian agents, avowed and secret; no public assembly, no private dwelling, from the cot of the peasant to the palace of the prince, is exempt from

their intriguing influence. The trading classes are told that the country will never be prosperous till it is united to the grand empire. The peasants are taught to look upon their seignorial lords as tyrants. The vanity of the rich man is flattered by jewelled crosses; the poor and venal noble barters the welfare and independence of his country for a bribe; while our hospodars, in addition to being the most servile slaves to the will of the autocrat, the one is avaricious beyond example, and the other only distinguished for his arrogance and vulgar insolence. Our vaunted constitution, from which so many advantages were to be derived, has become a dead letter, and however mortifying the conviction, we may rest assured that Russia will never cease intriguing till our principalities are incorporated in her already overgrown empire, unless the great powers of Europe interfere to prevent an act of such flagrant injustice: for what could avail any opposition on our part to prevent it?"*

* We have recently received intelligence from Moldavia to the effect that Russian agents are endeavouring with increased activity to win over the people to the views of their government. Not long since, M. Bezack, the Russian consul

"Since the establishment of the house of Bell & Co. at Bucharest, and the extensive commerce carried on through their agency with Great Britain, which has been already a source of general benefit to the principalities, the Russian employées have never ceased endeavouring to interrupt a communication so productive of good in every point of view. A lazaretto was formed at the mouth of the Danube; a toll was levied on every vessel entering that river; and various other hindrances interposed; for the Russian government well knew that we could furnish the same articles as those supplied by South Russia at a

at Jassy, addressed a note to the hospodar, announcing that the emperor had liberally granted his most gracious permission for the sons of the boyars, and other distinguished individuals of the principality, to be educated in the Russian universities; and when the course of instruction was completed, they would be considered eligible to every office of trust and emolument in the empire, besides being invested with all the privileges of the Russian nobility; imperial generosity only requiring in return that the Russian language should be taught in all the schools and universities throughout the principality!

The hospodar not only approved of this condescension of his imperial protector, but had the insolence to submit the note, with his own approval, to the consideration of the general assembly of the boyars, who, much to their honour, indignantly returned for answer, "*that they never would con-*

cheaper rate, and thereby inflict a severe blow on her commerce in that quarter."

Let Russia, however, beware; let her pause in her career of wrong; public opinion in France, as well as in England, execrates her policy; and perhaps in neither of these countries is her policy denounced with greater vehemence than in the Austrian states and throughout the whole of Germany; for however anxious the governments of Europe may be to maintain the peace of the world, they cannot restrain popular indignation when justly directed, and Russia may be taught, when she least expects it, that "honesty is the best policy."

sent that the Russian language should be taught their sons, neither would they permit them to be educated in any other country save their own." Public opinion, as may be supposed, is in the highest state of effervescence; the hospodar is denounced as a traitor, and the boyars are more determined than ever to resist this audacious attempt, and every other, of Russia to acquire the ascendancy in their country. It is also supposed, from the late movement of her troops toward the frontier, that Austria is determined to resist any further attempt of Russia on the independence of the principalities; this much, however, is certain, that that power has lately concluded a commercial alliance with Moldavia, and is now in treaty with Wallachia for the same purpose.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Arrival at Boyana—Austrian frontier—Nocturnal adventure of a dancing bear—Embarrassments at the Custom-house —Lazaretto —Loss of manuscript — Czernowitz —Account of that town.

My readers are already aware that we had arrived at the village of Boyana, the first in the Austrian Buckowina; but the hour being late, the sentinel refused to admit us till the following morning. We had consequently no choice but to take up our quarters for the night once more among the Moldavians.

The Austrian dominions are here separated from Moldavia by a narrow rivulet, across which is thrown a wooden bridge, terminating in a ponderous gate, upon which is blazoned the imperial eagle, with two necks; and if a stranger were to

judge of the reception he was likely to meet with from the ferocious countenance of the royal bird that here protects the frontier, he would certainly pause before he ventured to enter a territory so fiercely guarded. Still, however ferocious, however stern, I hailed the emblem with unmixed satisfaction and pleasure; even the sight of the sentinel, in his white jacket, old fashioned black gaiters and breeches, his blunt manners, and the sound of the German language, recalled to my memory the many happy days of boyhood I spent in that empire, among a people than whom there is none more kind and courteous. Even the government, while we acknowledge it despotic and repulsive to the traveller who first enters the Austrian territory, we must pronounce conciliating and paternal, eminently calculated to win the affections of the people, and to gain the good-will of a foreigner when domiciliated.

We will now return to our little village, which appears as if it had at one time formed part of that on the other side of the rivulet, in the Buckowina, prior to the separation of that province from Moldavia. We found great difficulty in

procuring accommodation, every house of public entertainment in the place being filled with Jews on their way to a neighbouring fair; we were therefore obliged to be thankful for the shelter of an immense barn, also crowded with Israelitish pedlers and their well-filled packs.

About day-break the next morning, while the pedlers were happily dreaming of the gains to be derived from the sale of their wares at the fair, a very unexpected visitor entered the barn; this was no other than a dancing bear, of most monstrous dimensions, who, having probably escaped from his slumbering keeper, now sought his morning meal, to obtain which, according to custom, he stood erect upon his hind legs, and with a growl looked around most beseechingly. The frightened Jews, between sleeping and waking, did not perceive the peaceful attitude of the intruder, but concluding that he had just escaped from the forest, gave vent to every exclamation of horror; their first impulse was to snatch up their packs, and retreat to a corner, where, having formed a barricade, they tremblingly awaited their doom. Every cry for help was answered

by a corresponding growl from bruin, as if he was highly amused at their terror. My companions and myself, more from necessity than choice, having taken up our quarters behind the door, were enabled to retreat to the house without coming in contact with the enemy; and having summoned the landlord, the alarm soon spread through the village, when the inhabitants, young and old, came hurrying to the scene of action, so that by the time the keeper made his appearance we had as many valorous champions, armed with pitchforks, scythes, and other agricultural implements, as would have sufficed to despatch a dozen bears. A moment was sufficient to lead away the cause of the disturbance and release the captives, who, emerging from behind their fortifications, trembling and pale, looked half dead with fear, but excited no other sympathy from the bystanders than peals of merriment, for poor bruin was found to be as docile as a lap-dog.

About eight o'clock, the superintendent of the custom-house having taken his coffee and deliberately smoked his morning pipe, the frontier gate

was thrown open for our admittance into the imperial dominions, when ourselves and baggage were immediately subjected to the fumigation prescribed to all travellers arriving in this direction from Moldavia.

The fumigation process is calculated to make a deep inroad into the purse of any traveller who may happen to have a quantity of baggage, as every article, however small, is charged separately a kreutzer, nearly a halfpenny. I had some difficulty in passing my fire-arms, as no traveller is allowed to journey through well-regulated Austria with weapons of any description, unless he is furnished with a special permission for that purpose; but a discretionary power being vested in the principal officers of the customs with respect to this and other regulations, and as I now fortunately met with a good-natured Austrian, he kindly overlooked the infringement.

My Turkish pipes and tobacco next came under review, and several other prohibited articles, all of which he courteously allowed to pass duty-free; when, however, he came to my well-filled MS., the fruits of my industry at the quarantine

of Galatz, his brow clouded, and he peremptorily refused to sanction its entrance into the empire. "If, indeed," said he, "it were a printed book, that could be read—but this unintelligible scrawl! It may be, for aught I know, a revolutionary manual, to stir up the disaffected Poles in Galicia; it may contain treason against *Sein allergnädigste selbst der guten Kaiser Ferdinand.* But even granting its tendency to be most innocent, it is a fixed regulation, from which no deviation can be made, that no MS. shall find its way into the Austrian empire, unless sanctioned by high authority; to disobey that regulation would cost me my place, and be my ruin."

Vain were all my solicitations, all my appeals, all my declarations that the MS. contained no matter revolutionary or dangerous to the Austrian empire; the luckless pages must be transmitted by a special courier to the governor of Czernowitz for his inspection. Like Noah's dove, the ill-starred MS. found no rest; for, being written in short-hand, and intermingled with Turkish, Tartar, and Circassian words, neither the governor nor the whole of the learned

professors of that town could decipher a single line; it was therefore sealed, and transmitted to a higher tribunal, for the perusal of the governor-general of Galicia, at Lemberg.

On arriving at that city, I was informed it was lost or mislaid. Whether this was really the case, or whether the literati of Lemberg, unable to translate it, and ashamed to confess their ignorance, retained it in their possession, I know not; but whatever may be the truth, I never recovered my literary treasure!—a loss which might have occasioned me serious inconvenience, if I had not, knowing the difficulty of travelling with MSS. through the Austrian dominions, transmitted the principal portion of my baggage, with my papers, to England by sea from Constantinople. Having a little anticipated my narrative in order to explain the loss of my MS., I will now resume my journey.

Our route from Boyana lay for the most part through the valley of the Pruth. The road, on entering the Buckowina, is one of the finest in Europe; and in a few hours we arrived in Czernowitz, to me a perfect oasis in the waste, so

long had I been accustomed to the dirty narrow streets, with their wooden huts, in the east, and the wide, straggling, ill-planned towns of South Russia.

Indeed, we do not often find a prettier town on the continent than Czernowitz; the buildings are modern, the streets are just the right breadth, and the moderate-sized houses have each a pretty garden and vineyard, which must impart to it during the summer season an appearance at once rural and delightful for a town. The situation, also, is much in its favour, being prettily placed on a rising hill overhanging the Pruth, surrounded by agricultural fields and high lands well covered with woods. In addition to all these advantages, Austrian cleanliness is everywhere the presiding deity; and I could not help wishing that the Teutonic races were more inclined to conquest, for wherever they penetrate, whether as conquerors or colonists, they carry improvement with them by introducing industry, cleanliness, and order.

In Czernowitz I took up my quarters for the night at the Schwarze Adler, kept by a German, where I found a clean, comfortable bed, and good

refreshment—luxuries in this part of Europe. The accommodation of a bed was a courtesy on the part of the landlord, it not being the custom in this country for the inns to be furnished with anything beyond the bedstead,—the mattresses, coverlits, &c., invariably forming part of the traveller's equipage.

MILITARY PEASANT OF THE BUCKOWINA.

CHAPTER XIX.

Observations upon the Austrian province, the Buckowina—Its resources—Fertility—Mines—Arrival in Galicia—Schnatin—Characteristics of the Polish peasantry—Unexpected detention on the road—Picture of a Polish inn—Nocturnal intruders—Arrival at Stanislaw—The Carpathians—Climate of Galicia.

At Czernowitz I purchased from an Austrian officer a light four-wheeled car, made of wicker-work, with a cabriolet top, well adapted to a tra-

veller unincumbered with baggage; and being furnished by the postmaster with a pair of stout horses, I was once more in good condition to pursue my route.

Previous, however, to leaving the capital of the Buckowina, we will say a few words relative to the general features of the province. Prior to the year 1777, it formed part of the principality of Moldavia; since which time it has been incorporated with the kingdom of Galicia. The majority of the inhabitants are the same race as those of the principalities, speak a dialect of the same language, and are quite as primitive in their appearance, habits, and manners. Still, the reclaiming hand of their German rulers was everywhere visible, not only in the excellence of the roads, but in a succession of neat villages, modern in their construction: we also occasionally meet with the tidy farm-house of the German colonist, and his comfortably-dressed family; while the traveller has the satisfaction of remembering that he runs but little risk of being surprised on the highroad by banditti.

The Buckowina, a charming province, is every-

where broken into valleys and hills rising in a gradual elevation to the Luczina, one of the highest summits of the Carpathian range. The soil is considered extremely fertile; and many of the slopes and ridges being protected in great part from the north wind, are well adapted to the culture of the vine; but notwithstanding these advantages, the country is very thinly inhabited, many districts in the interior still remaining almost in a state of nature. In addition to the fertility of the soil, the mountainous parts of the Buckowina are rich in minerals; the silver and lead mines of Kirli Baba, as well as those of copper at Passorita, are well known for their productiveness.

After crossing the Pruth, the road wound along the base of the lower range of the Carpathians to Schnatin, the first town in the ancient principality of Polish-Galicia,—straggling, dirty, and ill-built; but, lying on the brow of a small hill, when seen from a distance it formed a pleasing feature in the landscape. Here all was Polish—the language, dress, manners, and customs of the people. As I happened to pass through it on a

market-day, the streets were thronged with a motley population, consisting of numbers of the inferior nobility, well mounted, and each looking quite as fierce as a Caucasian guerilla,—Austrian soldiers, Jews, Armenians, and peasants, in their national costume. The latter, in their high lambskin caps and sheepskin mantles, gaudily braided, differ little in their dress from the Moldavians, except that they convert the hood of their mantle into a pocket. The women were dressed still more gaily; besides the fur jacket, braided with all the colours of the rainbow, several wore around the head a brass band, to which was attached a variety of coloured ribbands that floated down the neck and shoulders, in the same style as we sometimes see a pet-lamb dressed out by children. Nor were the military peasants, many of whom had flocked into town from the frontier, less characteristic in their dress and appearance.

I could not but admire the fine manly forms and broad shoulders of the peasantry of Galicia, who are exactly the sort of men to make good soldiers and support the toil of war; but I do not think,

in so small a town, I ever beheld such a scene of intoxication: vodka, the beloved vodka, was everywhere exposed for sale, not only in the houses, but on stands in the streets, and the peasants, having completed their sales, were then quaffing it as freely as if it was beer. It is remarkable that, of every other race, the Sclavonic is the most addicted to this degrading vice; whether in Russia, or well-ordered Austria, or Prussia, we find the Sclavonic part of the population slaves to their inclination for spirituous liquors.

My intention was to have passed the night at Tysmienica, but a slight accident having occurred to the wheel of the carriage, I was obliged to put up at one of the inns on the roadside, as towns in this country are not frequently met with. The fate of a traveller just arrived from any of the well-regulated countries in Europe, where money procures every luxury and comfort, placed in a similar dilemma, would be justly entitled to commiseration. As for dirt, filth, and the absence of every comfort and accommodation, a remote inn in Poland may rival the worst khan I ever met with in the east.

These receptacles for the accommodation of travellers, erected at certain distances from each other on the high road, are so similar in construction as to create, the belief that they must have been the work of the same architect. In form they more resemble an unusually long barn than a dwelling-house; on each side are the stables for the horses, and a couple of large rooms for the reception of the traveller, while the centre, which is generally filled with straw in a state of decomposition, is the home for the cattle in severe weather. One end of these Polish khans is always kept by a Jew, and the other by a Christian, for the accommodation of the members of their respective religions.

In the present instance I preferred taking up my temporary abode with those of my own faith, though I subsequently ascertained from my servant Nathan that the accommodation was much inferior to that afforded by the Jew. We entered the inn through an immense gate, (each end being secured by one of similar dimensions,) but found our passage completely barred up by groups of oxen, sheep, goats, and poultry, who, it would

appear, feeling indignant at the intrusion, most audibly vented their displeasure; and as our host happened to occupy the further end, we had no little difficulty in making our way to his dwelling. On arriving there, we found a Galician nobleman and his wife, together with two or three other travellers, already domiciliated for the night.

In addition to these, there was our host, his wife, and half a dozen screaming urchins. After taking supper, the little urchins were consigned to a loft of wicker-work; and as the people of these countries never leave home without their beds, that convenience forming no part of the furniture of an inn, each traveller proceeded to arrange his nest as best suited his taste. The place of honour, a snug corner near the stove, was assigned to the count, as the most distingué; but I must confess I felt not a little surprised to see the nonchalance with which the count and his wife prepared their toilette de nuit, exposed to the observation of a room full of strangers. Such is the force of habit!

The lady was really an elegant little woman,

spoke the French and German languages fluently; and her husband, from his conversation, appeared to be well educated and intelligent. They were on their way to Lemberg, and travelled in a carriage, with their own horses and servant. It is true, the carriage was somewhat antiquated in its construction; and to judge from the bearing of the coachman, he must have been elevated to the dignity of Jehu from the plough.

My straw couch being also arranged, I endeavoured to sleep; but to my cost I found this to be entirely out of the question. It was not the concert of the animals without, nor the equally noisy concert of the sleepers within, that prevented my repose, but the intense heat of the apartment, the stove having been replenished with as much fuel as would have sufficed to roast an ox; in addition to which, not the slightest breath of air could gain admittance either through the door or windows: nor did the myriads of fleas that incessantly tormented me by any means act as an opiate.

Leaving this vapour bath, I gladly changed my quarters to an out-house, which happened to be

the store room ; here the hostler, whom I roused with no little trouble from the land of dreams, having with a plentiful supply of clean straw arranged a couch for me on a heap of meal bags, I once more attempted to win the smiles of the coy goddess of repose ; in this, however, I was equally unsuccessful as before, for the legions of rats that had here taken up their abode came to a different determination : they marched and countermarched, skipped and gamboled, from me to the meal bags, and then back again, so that every idea of sleep vanished.

I now resolved to prove as great an enemy to their fun as they had been to my repose, and as the moon was shining most resplendently through the windows, I seized my pistols, and kept up an incessant fire against my tormentors, which soon put them to flight, but which had only the effect of arousing another host of enemies to my quiet, in the form of the whole of the inmates of the inn, both Christian and Jewish. Trembling with fear, and shivering with cold, they with one voice informed me that the house was beset by a band of Moldavian banditti, who had already carried off

the landlord and hostler, and would no doubt make captives, if not murder, every creature in the house! It was some minutes before my laughter would permit me to relieve their fears, and in the meantime the landlord and hostler, who had fled to the next village on the first report of my pistol, returned, accompanied by a host of valiant peasants, to relieve the besieged.

There was not a single town, village, or adventure, worth recording between this place and Stanislaw, the capital of a department of the same name, and certainly one of the prettiest and best-built towns in Galicia; it is situated in an extensive plain, and bears the soubriquet of "New Jerusalem, the capital of the Jews," on account of the majority of the inhabitants being of that persuasion.

After leaving the plain in which Stanislaw is situated, the road again wound round the base of the Carpathians, offering an endless variety of the most beautiful views of that stupendous chain, on to the very capital, Lemberg. The gigantic Kryran, with its rugged and angular peaks, which rises to a height of upwards of seven thousand

feet, is seen from Galicia to much greater advantage, and appears more stupendously magnificent than from any part of Hungary; but if we descend from this mountain road, we enter one of the most monotonous and tiresome plains that every wearied a traveller, comprehending the whole of Poland and part of Prussia, on to the Baltic on one side, and extending over the steppes of old Russia to the mountains of Siberia on the other.

We should not have expected from the latitude of Galicia that the climate was so severely rigorous as we found it. This is the consequence of its position being enclosed towards the South by the lofty chain of the Carpathians, and exposed to the north wind, which blows over the cheerless steppes of Russia and Poland. Hence, winter reigns here for at least six months with as great an intensity as in Sweden; and it frequently happens that at the same time when the inhabitants of the south side of the alps in Hungary and Transylvania are making hay, the people in some parts of Galicia are doomed to see their fields covered with snow.

CHAPTER XX.

Journey to Lemberg — Halicz—Its antiquity—Arrival at Lemberg—Description of that town—Claim advanced by Austria to Galicia—Soil and productions of that province —Its inhabitants— Their language — Remarks on the Polish Jews—Their character—Theatre at Lemberg.

THE only town worth mentioning between Stanislaw and Lemberg is Halicz, prettily situated on the Dniester, and interesting for having been at one time the capital of Galicia, and the residence of its ancient sovereigns, the remains of whose splendid castle still embellishes the landscape. Notwithstanding Halicz must be dear to the Poles, connected as it is with their ancient rulers and history, and that the fertile country in its vicinity abounds with the most beautiful prospects and appropriate sites for building, with the addition of being watered by a fine river, the

country appears deserted, and the town is now so miserable in its aspect, and reduced in population, as to be little better than a village.

Lemberg, in the Polish language *Lwow*, the capital of Galicia, for beauty and elegance far surpassed my expectations; the wooden houses and narrow streets of the old town have entirely disappeared, being replaced by modern buildings, for the most part of massive freestone, whose style of architecture is really tasteful. The ramparts that formerly surrounded the town have also been converted into an agreeable promenade, and the stagnant marsh judiciously drained; when viewed ensemble, the broad well-paved streets, the well-built houses, and imposing public edifices, (especially the town-house, a structure at once chaste and splendid, and one of its greatest ornaments,) justly entitles it to the distinction of ranking among the finest towns in the Austrian empire.

It is much to be regretted, however, that the situation—a confined hollow, fenced in with hills —has not been more judiciously selected; this may be romantic and pleasing for a village, but it

is ill-adapted for a large city, where a free circulation of air is so necessary to the health of the inhabitants. The want of a deep rapid river is also sensibly felt, for having nothing else than a narrow rivulet, the Peltew, (which is dry one half of the year and frozen the other,) to carry away the pollutions incident to every large town, fever very frequently prevails; and when it is unfortunately visited by an epidemic, the ravages are fearful. Only a few years since, when the cholera made its appearance at Lemberg, the loss of life was perhaps not exceeded by that of any other town in Europe.

How necessary, then, is it that the site of a populous city should be selected with a view to the public health; the free circulation of air, and a river calculated to carry away the filth which necessarily accumulates, are of the last importance. If we were to make an estimate of the relative healthiness and unhealthiness of the different cities in Europe, we should find the absence of these advantages to be among the most prolific causes of the sickness and mortality of the inhabitants.

I remained two days in Lemberg, at the pressing invitation of Count P——, a patriotic Pole, whose brave but unfortunate relative now pines in Austria's dark bastile, the Spielberg, in Moravia, for his gallant exertions in the cause of Poland during the late unhappy contest. This imprisonment, which is here considered illegal, the offence having been committed in a foreign country, is said to have been a boon granted by the emperor to Russian importunity. Be this as it may, it has excited the angry feelings of the people of Galicia against their German ruler; while the late outrages committed by the emperor, in conjunction with his allies, on their brethren, the inhabitants of Cracow, have not contributed to allay the irritation.

Since the revolution in Poland,—when so many of the inhabitants of Galicia became involved in the consequences of that ill-fated enterprise, and when the sympathy of the entire people was aroused in favour of their countrymen,—the Polish language, which previous to that period was neglected by the nobility, is universally spoken in every society, public and private, throughout

the country, in preference to the German, a circumstance which has given great umbrage to the Austrian government.

When glancing over the statistical accounts of Galicia, in the language of the Poles, Haliczia, we find it to contain about four millions and a half of inhabitants, being an increase of a million and a half since Austria took possession of the country in 1772. That government, in order to exculpate itself from the ignominy of being a party to the atrocious spoliation of Poland, grounds its right of possession upon an old document, which is said to prove that Galicia at one time formed a part of the kingdom of Hungary.

The great increase of the population affords a strong presumptive proof that Galicia has derived some benefit from the rule of Austria, which is the fact. She has reared several towns, with their splendid edifices; she has taught the people many of the arts of civilized life, many branches of useful knowledge; and, as example ever pleads far more powerfully than precept, she has sent among them German colonists, a people every where characterized by industry, perseverance,

cleanliness, and order. So that should any unforeseen event again elevate Poland to the rank of an independent kingdom, Galicia may feel thankful that she was at one time sheltered beneath the fostering wing of the eagle of Austria.

Notwithstanding the brief duration of the summer in Galicia, and the severity of the winter, the soil produces abundance of excellent grain, and the cattle, especially the horses, are highly esteemed. In addition to the natural fertility of the country, it has the advantage of being irrigated in every direction by the Dniester, the Vistula, the Pruth, the Bug, the Sereth, and their numerous tributaries. The mountains abound with minerals, and nearly the whole of the Galician side of the Carpathian range is composed of fossil salt, and such is the extraordinary abundance of this mineral that in some districts the peasants build their houses of it. Splendid forests everywhere cover the high lands; and on the loftier heights of the Carpathians is found that rare tree, the pinus cembra, which, like the oak, attains the age of a thousand years, without shewing any symptoms of decay. It is said to

excel every other in durability, from the circumstance that it is never attacked by worms or insects.

The inhabitants of Galicia, from among whom Austria is supplied with some of her bravest soldiers, are principally composed of the Polaken races, known under the various names of Goralin, Mazuraken, Rusniaken, &c. The language universally spoken by these people is the Polish, which bears a great affinity to the Russian; it is, however, less difficult to attain, and sounds quite as musical as the Italian: unlike the Russians, who adhere to the Greek, the Poles adopt the Latin character in writing and printing.

In addition to the Polaken (Poles), there are colonies of Germans, Moldavians, Wallachians, Bulgarians, and Hungarians, engaged in agriculture; and great numbers of Jews and Armenians, who pursue their commercial speculations in the towns. Such has been the increase of the Jews of late years, that they now amount to half a million. They may be everywhere distinguished by their peculiar costume, which is the same as I described at Jassy, and from its resemblance to

that of the Persians, it is highly probable that they came from that country to Poland and the adjoining countries after their captivity.

For the sake of the reputation of the sons of Israel in Galicia, I wish my account of them were to close here; but I do not think that any set of cheats can be found in Europe more accomplished in all the arts of knavery. No article, however trifling, which the traveller may possess, is secure from their pilfering propensities; and as nearly the whole of the inns in Galicia are kept by Jews, or provided with Israelitish *factors*, answering to the French valet de place, they allow their pedler brethren free admission, under pretence of vending their wares, whereas the real object of too many is to transfer to their own bags any portable article that may happen to be in the way. I frequently detected them, during my short stay in the country, in their sleight-of-hand practice, and it required the most unslumbering vigilance to guard against their depredations. In truth, we must consider the great number of Jews in Galicia, and indeed throughout the whole of Poland, as a serious

hindrance to the welfare of the inhabitants, for being, as we well know, absolutely and entirely mercenary, they contribute most fearfully to demoralize the people by vending, which they do almost exclusively, that accursed liquor, the vodka. They also indirectly encourage every kind of theft, for the robber is certain to find in the uninquiring Jew a purchaser of every article, from a pocket handkerchief to a horse.

I am sorry to be obliged to draw so unfavourable a picture of the character of a people whom I had hitherto regarded with sympathy; but it is the duty of a traveller to record the truth, if for no other purpose than to warn future tourists, who may extend their excursions to this part of Europe, against their wholesale impositions and petty pilfering.

In a country like Galicia, where the Jews form so large a portion of the population, we are astonished that the Austrian government, with its really paternal solicitude for the welfare of its subjects, does not enforce some reformation in their habits, or at least oblige them to adopt some mode of industry to obtain their subsistence that

might have the effect of rendering them useful, if not honest, members of the community. Instead of this, we cannot at present admit them to be anything else than leeches, imbibing nourishment from their fellow-subjects, cheating the simple peasant, and drawing from the industrious artisan the fruits of his daily labour. How easy would it be for a government despotically constituted like that of Austria to effect a reformation in this people, who are by no means deficient in talent, and possess a peculiar aptitude for excelling in the arts and manufactures! Their children might be taught trades and professions, rather than left to follow the example of their fathers. Neither would this militate against the ruling passion of a Jew—avarice,—as they would ultimately find it more to their advantage to depend for subsistence upon their own skill, than on the uncertain means of usury and petty traffic so universally resorted to by this people. It must, however, be confessed, their intolerant religion, like that of Islamism, overloaded with unmeaning ceremonies and prohibitory laws,—a religion so opposed to its members becoming

blended in manners, customs, and social institutions, with those who differ from them in faith, —would interpose strong obstacles. To which we may add, their aversion to any other modes of life than those of usury and petty traffic, by which they obtain wealth without resorting to hard labour, would not be easily conquered; for very rarely in these countries do we find a Jew engaged in agricultural pursuits, or any mechanical employment that requires physical exertion; still, as we before observed, a despotic government like that of Austria, which is at the same time paternal in its acts and tendencies, might overcome every difficulty.

To the traveller in Galicia, and indeed throughout the whole of Poland, the Jews are a source of constant annoyance. In every town and village he finds himself surrounded by a host of these tormentors, — some clamorously offering their services as factors, others thrusting their wares into his face; while the circumstance of nearly every inn throughout the country being kept by these people often occasions him serious inconveniences, for as their religious code forbids them

to transact any business on the sabbath, not even to light a fire, it frequently happens, if the inn is not provided with a waiter of a different faith, that not the slightest accommodation can be obtained.

Unfortunately, the Jews in Galicia are not favourably regarded by the Austrian government; a tax called *tolerance* is levied upon them, by which they purchase the privilege of living in that country. They are kept under the strictest surveillance by the police, detested by the people, who treat them with contumely, and subject them to vexations often wantonly oppressive, which only tends to increase their aversion towards their Christian brethren, whom they regard as tyrants, and no doubt prompts them to retaliate by practising upon them every art of knavery and fraud.

The Jew of these countries is indeed very different from his brethren in those lands in which they are better treated, and regarded with higher consideration. In Asia, for instance, where they are not only tolerated but respected by the Mussulman above every other people that differ from them in faith, they exhibit all the virtues incident

to a generous disposition; and however treacherous and deceitful in their dealings with Christians, they appeared to me to act faithfully towards each other, and displayed kindness and affection in their domestic relations. But here, degraded to the very base of the social column, the Jew is abjectly servile towards the Christian, and never hesitates debasing himself by every act, however mean, if he thinks it will lead to wealth, his only title to consideration.

The nobility of Galicia are also partly answerable for the demoralized state of the Jews; and such is their avaricious spirit, whether they have inns to let, grain to sell, horses to dispose of, or trinkets and finery to buy for their wives and daughters, the Jew is certain to be preferred, for, owing to his miserable mode of living and few wants, he can afford to give a better price, and sell cheaper, than the Christian. Thus nearly the whole commerce of the country is in the hands of the Jews, while the indigent among them seek to better their condition as factors, pedlers, and pilferers,—always taking care to avoid committing

any act that may compromise them in the eye of the law.

In the evening, I accompanied Count P—— and his family to the theatre, which in size and appearance is well suited to a town like Lemberg, which only numbers a population of about fifty thousand; neither was there any thing to complain of in the decorations and dresses; the latter were really splendid and elegant. My principal object, however, was to see the far-famed Madame Schmidt Frieze, whose attractions, it appeared, were so very great as to occasion the death of a fine young man, allied to some of the noblest families in Galicia, only a few months previously.

The impetuous youth, finding the object of his affections preferred a more fortunate rival, in a moment of disappointment, or insanity, committed suicide. In these matters there is certainly no accounting for taste, but to me the lady appeared plain in her person, without exhibiting either grace or uncommon talent as an actress, and assuredly a less captivating Desdemona never drove Moor or Christian mad for jealousy,—for

on this occasion she acted the heroine in Rossini's opera of " Othello."

The fiery hero was played by a little meagre woman, Madame de la Roche, who, though a good actress, was but very ill calculated to fill this character. The orchestra was excellent, as is generally the case in the Austrian empire, where music is so industriously cultivated; and the singing far better than could be expected in a provincial town so distant from the capital.

I must here beg leave to say a few words respecting my servant Nathan, who was so fortunate, after an absence of ten years, to find his father alive and well at Lemberg. Their meeting was really affecting. The old man, with his flowing beard blanched with age, threw himself on the neck of his long lost child, and wept like an infant: thus realizing the parable of the return of the prodigal son to his father; and, like him, the old man invited the whole of his friends to a banquet to celebrate the event, for he was very rich, having become so by pursuing the usual avocations of his race in these countries. It appears he commenced life as a factor, then dealt in

vodka, and kept an inn; after removing from Teschen to Tarnow, he finally settled in Lemberg, where he trafficked in the more costly merchandize of gold, silver, and fur. At the time the cholera raged in that town he was bereft of his wife, son, and daughter, which left him in his old age a solitary being, without a single individual in the world to whom he was attached. Broken-hearted and disconsolate, he retired from business, to linger out a cheerless existence, unblessed by affection, uncheered by hope, when the return of a son he had long mourned as dead once more gilded his days with gladness, and will probably be the means of adding many years to his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

Departure for Cracow—Disappointment—Remarks on the forcible possession of Cracow by the troops of the Northern powers—Arrival at Tarnow—Shepherds of Galicia—Villages of the Jews—Of the Poles—Miserable condition of the peasantry—Their addiction to vodka drinking — General demoralization — Mountaineers of the Carpathians — Commerce of Galicia — Distilleries —Predilection of the people for amusement—National character of the Galician Poles.

I LEFT Lemberg for Tarnow, distant eighteen posts, with the intention of taking Cracow on my route to Vienna, as I was extremely anxious to see this relic of Polish grandeur. I was, however, doomed to be disappointed, notwithstanding my passport was signed and countersigned by all the prescribed authorities, no traveller being then permitted to pass the cordon sanitaire, established by the northern powers to protect the political

health of the natives, without a special permission. So much for the independence of the Republic of Cracow!

The forcible possession of this ill-fated city, and the acts of tyranny committed upon the citizens, who were torn from the bosoms of their families and driven into éxile, is but ill-calculated to allay the irritation of the Poles. These victims to the ambitious policy of their neighbours, doomed to see their last asylum in the land of their forefathers invaded by their oppressors,—this last remnant of the independence of their ancient kingdom delivered up to the destroyers of their country, cannot feel otherwise than maddened at the outrage; and what Pole, with a spark of patriotism or love for his fatherland, whether the subject of Austria, Russia, or Prussia, does not feel indignant at the wrongs inflicted upon his country, and silently meditate vengeance?

That the citizens of Cracow assisted their brethren in the struggle for independence, that they gave an asylum to their unfortunate relatives, is true; but was it not natural? and should not this consideration have been viewed as an ex-

tenuating plea, and consequently have prevented the adoption of a measure of such severity against the natives of a state so insignificant, so utterly powerless, especially when the humane monarchs of Austria and Prussia were parties to the deed? As to the northern autocrat, we put his government entirely out of the question, where justice and humanity are under consideration, as we know it has long since adopted the axiom that "the end justifies the means."

Surely, if the paternal monarch of Austria had pursued a more conciliating line of policy, and had prevented by his influence this last indignity towards a fallen nation, he would at least have won the gratitude of the ill-fated Poles, and secured the esteem of Europe; whereas this measure, so unjust, so contrary to existing treaties, has had no other effect than to awaken the sympathies of every right-feeling man for the wrongs inflicted on Poland, and to strengthen his dislike towards despotic governments.

Tarnow, the capital of a department of the same name, has the advantage of a pretty situation, not a little improved by the river Baila; while the fine

park of Prince Sanguszko, at all times open to the public, forms an agreeable promenade for the citizens.

From hence to Bielitz, the first town in Silesia, eleven posts distant, I enjoyed some of the finest views I had yet seen of the Carpathians, whose gigantic forms, like so many pyramids of snow, were pictured in all their wintry grandeur on the vast horizon. This stupendous range here forms one of the noblest barriers by which nature ever divided one state from another.

I now saw for the first time the shepherds of Galicia dressed in their straw mantles, an article of dress which, however singular it may appear to the stranger, is considered to be a complete protection against inclement weather. We also passed various groups of peasants on their way to market; and I could not help deeply commiserating the poor women, who, heavily laden with large baskets of vegetables, trudged along barefooted, while their lazy selfish lords, comfortably booted and wrapped in sheep-skin mantles, proudly led the way, burdened by no heavier load than a small basket of eggs, poultry, or such

like. How much to be deplored is the fate of women in this, and indeed in every half-civilized country in Europe, where they are too often treated as if they were created for no other purpose than to be the slaves of man, being doomed not only to the most incessant toil in their houses, but to hard labour in the fields!

The traveller, in passing through Galicia, cannot but be struck with the remarkable difference between the villages of the various colonists and those of the natives. A German village is instantly distinguished by its neatness, cleanliness, and well-built houses; indeed, in passing through them we might fancy ourselves transported to Germany itself. The others, whether belonging to the Wallachs, the Jews, or the native Poles, might have disputed for pre-eminence in dirt.

A Jewish village is generally in the form of an open square; the houses, or rather huts, are built of wood, and entirely on the ground floor; they certainly are not very capacious, consisting of only two rooms, (sometimes with a little verandah

in front,) one serving as a shop, the other for every domestic purpose, in which the whole family, from the patriarch down to his grand-children, may be seen living in harmony together.

The villages of the Poles differ entirely from those of the Jews; with them land appears to be of small value, for every cot is detached; and as there is no order nor system attended to in the erection of their villages, the general effect is that of a chaotic mass of huts, more resembling sheds for the reception of cattle than dwellings for man. They are rudely constructed of wood, and thatched with straw, with only one little window towards the road. The single apartment which constitutes them is in most districts at once stable, bedchamber, and kitchen, with an immense stove in the centre, at which they perform their culinary operations; around this the beds are arranged for the entire family, generally a shake down of straw; and should the weather be severely cold, the cattle are added to the friendly party, and no doubt enjoy to the full their warm quarters.

The picture will not however be complete unless I mention that, in lieu of a garden in front, a mountain of litter is piled up as a nosegay.

Without denying that the Austrian government has effected many improvements in Galicia, we are obliged to confess that these improvements have been principally confined to the surface. The traveller, pleased with the well-kept roads, the admirable regulations for posting, the beautiful public edifices in the large towns, the excellent system of the police and of the government establishments, is induced to bestow on the executive administration the highest commendation. But let him penetrate into the dwellings of the peasantry, inquire into their manner of living, become acquainted with their hardships and misery, and he will feel astonished that a government professing to be paternal, and which it really is in other parts of the empire, should have so entirely neglected the moral improvement of the Galicians. This is the more extraordinary, for should the Austrian government be desirous to introduce any amelioration into the social system of these people, it

has not the same obstacles to contend with as among their neighbours the Hungarians, where the feudal system still exists, and where the rights of the nobles, guaranteed by their peculiar constitution, cannot be interfered with except at the risk of exciting serious discontent, it may be of producing a revolution."

So far as my own experience goes, there are few countries in which the peasantry are more miserable. It is true, they are no longer serfs, no longer subject to the caprice of an arbitrary seignior, a privilege they owe to their Austrian rulers; still their condition is rather deteriorated than improved, because the landed proprietor, no longer possessing an immediate interest in the welfare of his tenant, cares little about his health or general welfare, his sole object being now to obtain in lieu of rent the stipulated portion of the produce of the land he has let him, this being the usual mode by which the agricultural peasant pays his landlord in this country. In addition to this, he is sometimes obliged to work on the farm of his lord, during some specific number of days in the week, as may be

agreed upon between the parties. But whether the landed proprietors of Galicia are more than usually avaricious, or the agricultural population more than ordinarily idle and demoralized, certain it is that the peasantry are sunk in the deepest poverty. In many districts their food consists of nothing better than potatoes and oaten cakes,—even the latter they are too frequently unable to afford, notwithstanding Galicia exports quantities of grain; perhaps once or twice a year a lamb or a kid is slaughtered, on a festive occasion, but to animal food in general they are utter strangers.

The country produces no wine; beer is only drank by the inhabitants of towns; the universal beverage of the whole agricultural population, and indeed of the working classes generally, being vodka. Here again we must condemn the dominii, many of whom are proprietors of distilleries, thus encouraging a passion for ardent spirits in order to increase their own revenues. To this severe condemnation, we are happy to say, there are some noble exceptions, whom it would be invidious to name,—enlightened patriots, that promote by the most paternal solicitude the

comfort of their dependents, and use all their influence to discourage the pernicious practice of vodka drinking; but unfortunately for Galicia they are not so numerous as could be wished. Indeed, I have been frequently assured that the vodka is the prolific source of nearly every crime among the peasantry. Strife and quarrelling are of daily occurrence, not unfrequently terminating in murder; in order to procure the inebriating draught, robbery, in short, every dishonest practice, is resorted to; and if we may judge from the official catalogue of criminals, and from the accounts given me by an Austrian police officer, it would appear that their number in Galicia far exceeds that of any other of the Austrian provinces, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants.

Vodka drinking being then confessedly the source of crime and demoralization, is it not lamentable that the government does not resort to energetic measures in order to remedy the evil? for not only are the morals, but the health of the population ruined by this unhappy propensity, as it has been clearly proved that in those districts where the people are most prone

to its indulgence, the deaths are proportionably increased; and when the cholera visited Galicia, it sought its victims, with comparatively but few exceptions, among the intemperate.

The lot of the shepherds in the mountain districts is far more enviable than that of their brethren on the plains, for although they suffer much from the severity of a climate like that of Galicia, their manner of living is infinitely superior to that of the agriculturists: confined to their narrow valleys and steep hills, and consequently little accustomed to intercourse with the world, their morals remain uncorrupted, while they can at least indulge in diet far more wholesome,—milk, butter, and cheese; neither have they the same facilities for procuring the vodka. From an Austrian officer who had long resided in the Carpathians, I received a highly favourable account of the character of the mountaineers in general, and more especially of those employed in the mining districts, to which he himself belonged. I also learned from the same gentleman that the inhabitants of the Galician side of the Carpathians were more than usually afflicted with

that curse of mountainous districts, the goitre, and that the number of *cretins* was deplorable.

The very little commerce carried on in Galicia consists principally of salt, cattle, and grain; the cultivation of flax and hemp has very much diminished; and the fabrication of linen, that formerly employed thousands of the poor peasantry, and was exported in considerable quantities to Spain, Portugal, America, and the West Indies, is now reduced to that required for home consumption, or to exchange with the Hungarians for wine and the other productions of their more genial climate; there is also a trifling commerce carried on with the other Austrian states in wax, honey, fur, hides, wool, &c., for which they receive in return their manufactures.

Distilleries are, however, unfortunately increasing; there is scarcely a seignior in the country who has not one of these establishments for the encouragement of vice and idleness on his estate. Those kept by the Jews, I was assured on good authority, amount to nearly three thousand; to which we may add at least an equal number

belonging to Christians. Indeed it is a common saying in Austria, that the Galicians distil as much *brantwein* (spirituous liquors) annually, as would inundate the whole country!

Besides this copious supply of drams for the lower classes, in Lemberg and all the large towns we find various manufactories of rosoglio, for those who may possess a more refined taste, and better-filled purse. These elegant apologies for dram drinking are retailed at the conditories and coffee-houses, where we see them sipped with much gusto by the beaus, and sometimes, if report speaks true, even by the belles.

The miserable condition of the Galician peasantry does not however appear to have any tendency in repressing their natural vivacity: every village inn throughout the country, on Sundays and holidays, resounds with music and dancing; bands of gypsies, usually the musicians, may be seen strolling from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, amusing the peasantry with the mirthful strains of the bagpipe, violin, clarionet, symbols, and tambourine; and however poor the inhabitants may be, these

wandering minstrels are certain of some recompence.

This attachment for music and dancing is also a prominent feature in the habits of the better classes; every town, however small, has its redout, ball, and concert rooms; and the Polish national dance, when well executed, is exceedingly graceful.

The national character of the Poles exhibits many features we must admire; there are no people more hospitable, or who display greater courtesy towards a stranger, not excepting even the poorest peasant; the nobility are highly educated, and we rarely find a person among the better classes of society who does not speak several European languages; neither do the peasantry in general evince any want of quick-witted shrewdness, or sagacity. We must therefore come to the conclusion, that if temperance were introduced among the lower orders, the vicious habits of the Jews reformed, and above all, if the nobility, who are the great landed proprietors, were to become more patriotic, and endeavour to ameliorate the condition of their

dependents, especially by encouraging industry, Galicia might become one of the happiest provinces in the Austrian empire.

In passing through these countries from the Danube, Moldavia, the Buckowina, and Galicia, I was much struck with the frequent recurrence of tumuli, similar to those I have already described in Krim Tartary: here they appear like landmarks, indicating various routes, which was probably the case at the time when these provinces formed part of the great steppe of Western Tartary.* This supposition is grounded

* Having in my preceding volumes said so much respecting the immense steppe of Krim Tartary, perhaps a short explanation relative to the general character of countries thus designated may not be altogether unacceptable, especially as some of my friendly provincial reviewers have expressed a wish to this effect.

The word steppe is employed to indicate a track of champagne country, covered with moss and herbs, and destitute of trees and stones: though of Russian derivation, we have adopted it in the absence of one better calculated to express its meaning. There is no district in the British islands to which the term is strictly applicable; the heath-covered bogs of Ireland, and the unproductive commons of England, being altogether dissimilar. What is usually called the great steppe, extends with little intermission from the

on the circumstance that they do not form a group of tumuli, as in the Crimea steppe, being

Chinese empire to the Danube, the Carpathians, and the Baltic, including the whole of Eastern Tartary, a great part of the Crimea, Besserabia, the countries in the vicinity of the Caucasus, and the Caspian sea, particularly the neighbourhood of Astrakan, and the Wolga; to this we may add immense districts of old Russia and Poland, forming altogether a kind of zone.

This immense district being exposed to the prevalence of strong winds, which prevent the fall of those refreshing showers so necessary to the growth of vegetation, the corn, and in fact every thing planted, soon dies for want of nourishment, though the soil is in many places exceedingly rich, and, were it not for the long continuance of these dry winds and the want of rain, capable of affording support to millions of human beings; whereas at present, the land is appropriated entirely to the rearing of cattle, particularly sheep; still the herbage is so scanty and parched, that we feel surprised in what manner they obtain nourishment.

In some parts of the Crimea, Besserabia, the Wolga, Dniester, and Danube steppes, countries situated at the extremity of the zone, and consequently not so much exposed to the evil influences I have specified, the inhabitants, by means of extensive and continual irrigation, succeed in obtaining a scanty supply of corn and vegetables.

It is very generally believed, by some of the best informed geologists of ancient and modern times, that these countries formed at one time an immense sea; indeed, any traveller, even if not scientific, who is in any degree conversant with geology, and will take the trouble of examining

placed here and there on eminences generally in a continued line.

the strata, and other indications, must come to the same conclusion, and be satisfied that the waters rested here many centuries after the flood. Moreover, there cannot be a doubt, if the waters of the various seas and rivers in these countries continue decreasing in the same ratio as they do at present, particularly the Caspian and the sea of Azow, that the day is not far distant when their beds will also form part of the same steppe. Both Hippocrates and Herodotus have left us highly interesting accounts of this vast steppe, which it appears was in the same state in their day as at present.

CHAPTER XXII.

Silesia—Aspect of the country—Superstition of the inhabitants—Reflections on the Roman-catholic religion—Contrasted with that of the reformed church—Arrival at Teschen—Its romantic situation—Gast-Haus—Honesty and bonhommie of the inhabitants—Remarks relative to the peace of Teschen—The Empress Maria Theresa—Frederic the Great—Historical sketch of Silesia—Characteristics of the country—Rivers—Inhabitants—Their language—Manners—Costume.

BIALA, the last town in Galicia, is united to Bielitz, within the Silesian frontier, by a massive stone bridge across the river Biala; the population of both, amounting to about nine thousand, are considered to be the most industrious and commercial in this part of the Austrian empire; indeed, of this we are everywhere reminded by the numerous manufactories of leather, cloths, linen, &c.

Bielitz, the most important and best built of these towns, is prettily situated on an eminence on the left bank of the Biala, and being partly surrounded by the fine park of Prince Sulkowsky, adds much to its picturesque appearance; while the ponderous, lofty castle, a fine monument of antiquity belonging to that nobleman, imparts to the town the appearance of an ancient city.

The traveller, on passing into Silesia, finds nothing to remind him that he has entered a different province; the face of the country, the houses, the appearance of the peasantry, are in no way changed: this arises from the circumstance that Silesia was formerly a province of Sarmatia's luckless land. The landscape was perhaps more romantic, and the scenery more beautifully wooded, than that through which I had previously passed in Galicia; and, as in that province, there were few or no gentlemen's seats to be seen, no indications of opulence to announce that a respectable, wealthy class were exercising their beneficial influence on the community, it being the custom of the landholders of these countries to reside in towns. There was,

however, an abundant supply of crosses, chapels, with their ever-burning lamps, and images of saints, on the high-road, particularly of St. Florian, who is here, and also in Moravia, what St. John of Nepomuc is in Bohemia—the patron saint of the country; hence his picture or statue may be seen adorning nearly every house, bridge, and public building; and in addition to being the patron saint of these provinces, the far-famed Saint Florian is the sovereign protector against fire! He is usually represented pouring a bucket of water upon a blazing house!

I also met occasionally with a sturdy friar, or mendicant capuchin, with bare legs and sandaled feet, coarse woollen dress, and rope girdle; for these provinces are still the stronghold of the Roman-catholic faith. However much the imagination may be interested by this class of persons—however much their singular costume may give variety to the landscape—I cannot but think that if they were to dress more respectably, and relinquish their vagrant mode of life, they would give more might and efficacy to their instructions; at least, they would win the respect due to them as

ministers of the Christian religion. When we take into account the present advanced state of European intelligence, the existence of such a class of persons, the multiplication of crosses and images of saints, in any part of the Austrian empire, appears anomalous to the age. How is it that the intellectual governments of the catholic countries of Europe do not see that some modification of the institutions of their religion is necessary, in order to meet the rapid enlightenment of the public mind—some approach towards the simple rites of protestantism—notwithstanding they have before them the example of a neighbouring country, whose inhabitants in one instant awoke from the sleep of superstition in which they had remained for ages, to the deceitful glare of infidelity, convulsed Europe, and disseminated principles injurious to the best interests of man? Instead of which, misled with the idea that protestantism fosters republican principles, leads a people to desire a representative form of government, liberty of the press, trial by jury, &c., they studiously discourage its advance; and yet, if they would look abroad, they would find the pro-

testant countries of Europe to be those most prosperous, most free from revolutionary excitement, and the inhabitants the most sincerely religious. It is true that the catholic form of worship appeals more strongly to the imagination; that the sound of solemn music, the clouds of incense, the splendid dresses of the priests, are more calculated to make a deep impression upon the vulgar mind than the simple rites of the reformed faith. But man, once advanced in knowledge, will not concern himself about the mere external forms of religion; he will rather seek to ascertain its purifying influence upon the mind, its efficacy as a guide in conduct. We may therefore feel assured that the catholic religion, in its present form, will never spread widely in a land where the people are intellectual and highly civilized; and that nations as they advance in intelligence will renounce it. If we are to judge men by their actions, we must conclude that there is more true religion, more Christian feeling, more morality, exhibited by the professors of protestantism than among their catholic brethren, even though we are inclined to admit

that some of the sectarians divest public worship too rigidly of any external ceremony calculated to impart a becoming dignity to the service of the Most High. But it is not altogether the external forms of the catholic religion that deserve our censure so much as the religious intolerance it encourages, the superstitious observances it inculcates, the various social abuses to which some of its institutions give rise, so well known to every English traveller who has resided in catholic countries on the continent, and which I have heard repeatedly condemned, in terms of the strongest reprobation, even by well-informed catholics themselves.

But to return to the inhabitants of Austrian-Silesia: I found that vodka here, as well as among the Galicians, was resorted to as the popular remedy for every evil. Should a man be indisposed, a draught of that spirituous liquor is administered; if he cuts his finger, the same remedy is applied; and the peasantry unfortunately entertain the belief that this pernicious fluid is a preventive against that dreadful malady, the *Plica Polonica*, so prevalent in these provinces; consequently, this opinion serves as an apology to the whole

population for dram-drinking, which is carried to such an extent that we frequently see the infant in its mother's arms almost convulsively writhing while she pours the fiery liquid down its throat.

The first place of any interest at which we arrived, after leaving Bielitz, was Teschen, distant about three posts, formerly the capital of the duchy of Teschen, and governed by its own princes, till the death of the late duke Albert, who, dying without issue, bequeathed his little territory to the archduke Charles of Austria; that prince, however, wisely transferred his right of sovereignty to his brother the emperor, reserving to himself the more substantial benefit of its revenues. This was the duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen who erected the beautiful monument, by Canova, in the Augustiner kirche at Vienna, to the memory of his wife Christina, a princess of the house of Austria.

Teschen, with its faubourgs, is a pretty, well-built town, pleasantly situated in the centre of a ridge of small hills, between the river Olsa and the romantic valley of the Bober. The streets are wide, regular, well paved, and clean; the environs are neatly laid out in pleasure-gardens;

which, with their well-frequented coffee-houses, are very agreeable places of public resort; while the town-house, a fine building, surmounted by an imposing tower, together with the ducal castle, seated upon a high hill, impart additional beauty to the surrounding landscape, which is highly picturesque.

The town contains a population of between six and seven thousand: although the Germans do not predominate, not a few are the descendants of the colonists of that nation; hence results its cleanliness, the industry of the inhabitants, and the superiority of their manufactures, for Teschen is entirely a commercial town; and to judge from the general appearance of the people, they have no reason to complain of the decay of trade; neither had I any reason to complain of my treatment at the *Gast-haus* at which I took up my quarters: indeed, I shall long remember Teschen, for here I first enjoyed, since my return to Europe, the comforts of civilized life. I was kindly welcomed at the door by the landlord and his family, with a "*Willkom mit Gott!*"—conducted to a cleanly room,—and though I had repeatedly

railed against German beds, their want of curtains, suffocating plumeaus, and contracted dimensions, I now discovered that entering Germany from the east or from the west makes a great difference in the feelings of the traveller. In short, let him cross its frontier from Galicia (Silesia being included among the provinces that constitute the German empire), and he will know how to appreciate a German hotel,—he will know how to estimate at their full value the bonhommie of the people, their honesty, reasonable charges, attention, and kindness. What a contrast to the countries I had just explored! for during the whole of my tour through Moldavia, the Buckowina, and Galicia, to Teschen, not one of the landlords at the inns where I changed horses or passed a night would be answerable for the safety of my carriage, or any part of my baggage,—such is the demoralized state of these countries! whereas here, from the moment I entered my hotel, the merest trifle was sacred; and when, according to the practice I had so long pursued, I demanded of my landlord whether he would guarantee the safety of my effects while I strolled about the town and

its environs, he looked at me with surprise, and answered, "Certainly, even if your portmanteau contained nothing but gold and diamonds!"

Teschen enjoys some celebrity on account of its manufacture of fire arms, but still more to the circumstance that in the *Land-Haus* of the town, which is proudly shewn to travellers, was concluded the peace of 1779 between Austria and Prussia, the last act of the good Maria Theresa. That kind-hearted sovereign, although events singularly concurred to render her reign one of continued strife, was no friend to war; and now, dreading that the rashness and youthful impetuosity of her son Joseph might lead him into danger, her maternal feelings induced her to make private overtures to Frederic at Thugut, without the knowledge of her ministers or son, who, with Marshal Lascey and a hundred thousand Austrians, supported by fifteen hundred cannon, had taken up a strong position on the Elbe, near Jaromiez, determined to give the Prussians a warm reception. Old Fritz at that time was no longer the hardy warrior of other days; an easy carriage was the substitute for a prancing steed; he was no longer

able to gallop from line to line, where his mere presence inspired his troops with courage; consequently neither party felt inclined to interpose any serious obstacle to the termination of hostilities. Besides, Frederic must have known that the Austrian army at that moment was materially improved in discipline and morale, and if an action had taken place, in all probability the advantage would have rested with them, from their superiority in numbers. The articles of the peace were not, however, framed on this supposition, as they were entirely in favour of Prussia, and highly incensed the sanguine and ardent Joseph. On the other hand, Frederic had every reason to be contented, for a valuable territory, the whole of Lower Silesia, was ceded to him and his descendants for ever, comprehending six hundred and forty German square miles, with a soil highly fruitful, well watered with navigable rivers, and containing rich mines of iron, coal, &c. It also gave Prussia an accession to her population of upwards of two millions, and extended her dominions to within a short distance of the frontiers of Hungary; whereas the portion which fell to

the share of Austria was Upper Silesia, with a population not exceeding three hundred thousand.

Frederic had dearly earned this increase to his kingdom; but however sanguinary and protracted the struggle might have been, Silesia was the theatre of all his glory, will long be remembered by his people, and is now the richest gem in the Prussian diadem, for after its conquest and cessation he materially improved the condition of the people; the axe was laid to the root of superstition, the nobility deprived of their feudal power, the whip and slavery for ever abolished, liberty of conscience guaranteed, commerce and industry promoted, and German colonists encouraged to settle in the land, besides various other beneficial acts and regulations, which, though then regarded as grievances, are now appreciated by the people as they deserve.

Prior to the annexation of Silesia to the Prussian crown, the inhabitants were in the highest degree superstitious and intolerant; the whole country was covered with crosses, images of saints, temples to the Madonna, &c. Neither

were the people less characterized by their dirty and slovenly habits, resembling in these points their neighbours, the Polaken. I regret to say that Upper or Austrian Silesia, in which Teschen is situated, has not improved in an equal degree, for having already explored Prussian Silesia, an account of which I have given in my work on Germany, I was enabled to make the comparison.

The Quadi, it is supposed, were the original inhabitants of Silesia, who at a subsequent period were driven out or exterminated by the Sarmatians, for not a single vestige remains to tell of their language or existence; after which this fine country remained for many years incorporated with the kingdom of Poland. At a later period it became partially independent, when it was ruled by a succession of feudal princes; these again were subdued by John, king of Bohemia, who dying without male issue, his dominions reverted to the emperor, Charles IV., of the house of Austria, and we are all acquainted with the details of the sanguinary war of which this province was the theatre till the peace of Teschen.

If Upper Silesia wants the fertile fields, wealthy towns, and industrious inhabitants of Prussian Silesia, the country is beautifully picturesque; for being situated at the base of the Carpathians, or as the natives term them, the Beskiden, and every where hilly and well-wooded, abounding with romantic vallies and secluded glens, with a population who are principally occupied in tending their flocks and herds, this Arcadian land offers an interesting *pied de terre* to the tourist who may wish to pass a few pleasant months in summer.

The scenery around Teschen is delightful; the source of the great Polish river, the Vistula, is not far distant, together with that of the Oder, one of the most important rivers of North Germany, which, after flowing through Silesia, Brandenburg, and Pomerania, empties its waters into the Baltic. The Vistula is even of greater consequence; it takes its course through the cities of Cracow and Warsaw, then, after receiving the Bug and several other minor streams, flows onward with increased volume to Dantzic, where it also empties its waters into the Baltic. In addition to the pleasure of exploring the sources of these fine

rivers, there is the far-famed pass, Jablunka, to be visited, which leads through the Carpathians into the centre of Hungary. Nor are the inhabitants less deserving attention, for I do not believe that in any country, of the extent of Austrian Silesia, is to be found so great a variety of people, nor any among whom the national costume, manners, and customs are more faithfully preserved, or who live on more friendly terms with each other. Independently of the natives, composed of various Sclavonic tribes, the Hanaken, Slowaken, Horaken, Podzulaken, &c., perhaps a dozen altogether, each speaking a different patois of the Sclavonic, there are German colonists, Jews, Wallachs, and Nomadic gypsies; hence it often happens that the few hundred inhabitants of a small town speak, like the builders of Babel, a medley of languages.

Should the traveller happen to arrive in one of these towns on a fête day, when the people are decorated in their holiday finery, he might fancy he was beholding a numerous assembly attired for a ballet. Here we see a man dressed in a cocked hat with streaming ribbons; there a woman in a

gaudy jacket, trimmed with fur, a blue or yellow short petticoat of many folds, red stockings, and large plated buckles in her shoes. In another place, we behold a Hanaken, in his large white mantle, slouched broad-brimmed hat, breeches that scarcely reach the knee, and half-boots. The women of this tribe usually envelop the head and shoulders in a white linen shawl, which the young damsels take care to arrange with no small share of coquetry. Intermingled with these, we see the wives of the farmers and tradesmen, decorated in their gilt caps, with wings resembling those of the butterfly; aprons of many colours, gowns without sleeves, short petticoats, and red or yellow stockings. Neither must we omit, to complete the picture, the shoeless mountaineers of the Carpathians, wrapped in their sheep-skin mantles, quite as wild-looking as the most uncouth Tartar tribe I beheld in the Caucasus; the only difference I could see between the dress of the men and women was that the latter braided the hem of their sheep-skin garment with gaudy-coloured worsted.

What a fund of amusement do not these people

offer to a traveller who may feel inclined to pass a summer among their mountains, and study their national customs and manners; for notwithstanding that, like their neighbours the Poles, they indulge somewhat too freely in vodka, they are not, generally speaking, poor, and as they are enthusiastically fond of music, a man even of refined taste would derive much pleasure from their national songs and dances.

MORAVIAN PEASANTS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Departure from Teschen—Some particulars relative to post-travelling in Silesia—Arrival in Moravia—Description of Olmütz—Defeat of Frederic the Great—French prisoners—General Lafayette—Austerlitz—Policy of Austria—Arrival at Brünn—Spielberg, the bastile of Austria—Brünn and its characteristics—Reforms of Joseph II.—Character of that monarch—Resources of the Austrian empire.

THE distance from Teschen to Vienna is about twenty-one posts, the road one of the finest in the

Austrian empire, and the posting excellent; while at the inns we find every accommodation which can conduce to the comfort of the traveller. The postillions, unlike their brethren in other parts of Germany, especially the north, appear not to be characterized by the phlegm and tardy habits so natural to the Germans as a nation, for they fly on from station to station as if life and death depended on their speed. A tariff is kept at each post station; consequently the traveller is not exposed to the slightest imposition; and the charges at the inns are so reasonable that his purse is very moderately taxed; nor is the administration of the posting establishment less deserving of praise: there is no time lost in waiting for a relay of horses; at the same time we cannot complain of the rate of posting, the demand for a pair of horses for each station being only one florin, fifty-two kreutzers, and the postillion will consider himself amply remunerated by a *trinkgeld* of thirty kreutzers, about one shilling.

The country between Teschen and Olmütz still preserved its romantic character; the inhabitants appeared in easier circumstances, the land better cultivated, the villages more frequent, cleanly,

and better built; there were also several pretty little towns, such as Friedeck, Freyberg, Weiskirchen, &c., whose population were all in a greater or less degree engaged in manufactures, or some description of commerce.

During the whole of this route, I very rarely met with any individual who exhibited that squalid poverty so general in Galicia, where the traveller is certain to be surrounded at all the post stations and inns on the road by groups of importunate Jews, and miserable peasants, screaming, "*kleba! kleba!*" (bread.)

I passed the night at Olmütz, or as the Moravians call it, Holomauc, one of Austria's first-rate fortresses, and so strongly defended with high walls and redoubts, that till we enter it, the town, with the exception of one or two lofty spires, is completely invisible. This fortified town has also the advantage of being surrounded by the Morawa or March, whose pent-up waters in the event of a siege can at any time be let out, so as to inundate the surrounding country, and thus effectually prevent the approach of an enemy.

Olmütz, which was formerly the capital of

Moravia, is considered to be a town of great antiquity; here the kings of Bohemia (in whose dominions the province was included) had a palace, now the residence of a bishop, and famous for being that in which King Wenceslaus was assassinated. This town is also celebrated in the history of the German wars, for in its immediate neighbourhood the well-known chief, Sternberg, in 1241, completely routed the Tartars, who had invaded these countries, and laid every thing waste with fire and sword to the gates of Olmütz. Nor was old Fritz more fortunate, as in the year 1758, after besieging it for seven weeks, he was at length compelled to retire with the loss of thousands of his men, the whole of his ammunition waggons, and a large sum in specie, destined to pay the troops, all of which fell into the hands of General Lascy. The discomfiture of the Prussians would have been even still more complete, if his colleague Daun had properly supported him; the advantage must have been considerable, for the empress Maria Theresa, in acknowledgment of the bravery of the inhabitants of Olmütz during the siege, not

only conferred patents of nobility upon the burgomaster and the notables of the town, but granted the citizens several important privileges, which they still enjoy.

During the late war with France, Olmütz was one of the principal depots for French prisoners of war. Here Beurnonville, one of the earliest actors in the French revolution, was confined; and here, at a later period, General Lafayette spent many a dreary hour, till the Austrian government granted his release. The town contains at present, independently of the garrison, about eleven thousand inhabitants; several of the churches and public buildings, for a town of this rank, possess considerable architectural merit, and the squares are more spacious, and the streets broader, than we generally find in a fortified town; some of these, particularly the former, are adorned with elegantly-constructed fountains, and columns dedicated to religious purposes. Olmütz is also the seat of learning; besides the university and the public seminary, there is the bishop's academy, and an excellent gymnasium. Attached to the Ursuline convent for nuns is a school for

the youthful part of the population of their own sex; but the famous college of the Jesuits has been converted into barracks.

A short distance from the high road between Olmütz and Brünn, near Wischau, lies the far-famed battle field of Austerlitz, known in Germany by the name of the *Dreikaiserschlacht* (battle of the three emperors). The only object now left to remind the spectator of the murderous conflict is a decayed tree, from whence it is said Napoleon directed the movements of his army. The little town, which contains about two thousand inhabitants, is neatly built, and prettily situated in a fruitful valley on the Littawa; the fields around it appear to be highly cultivated, and we cannot wonder at their fertility when we remember that upon this spot upwards of twenty thousand men bit the dust.

Like the peace of Teschen, we have here another instance of the timid policy pursued by the Austrian government; for notwithstanding Napoleon gained the day by means of one of his own clever manœuvres—breaking through the centre of the allied army, and throwing them into

confusion—his losses were immense, and his troops but ill able, from their exhausted condition, to oppose the reserve of the Austrian army under the command of the archduke Charles, which might have been brought into action the following day. In addition to this, such was the enthusiasm of the Hungarians and the Bohemians in favour of the house of Austria, that every man capable of bearing arms in these provinces was ready to march against the enemy.

The timid emperor Francis, however, and the mild Alexander, sought for peace, which was concluded at Presburg, its stipulations being highly disadvantageous to the house of Austria, and pregnant with the most disastrous consequences to Europe. Some of the German historians attribute the defeat of Austerlitz to the treachery or negligence of prince Auersberg, who, it is said, omitted to set fire to the Tahor bridge over the Danube, which had been prepared with straw and pitch for that purpose. If his carelessness were wilful, he richly deserved even a worse punishment than the two years imprisonment inflicted on him, for had this been done, the progress of

the French would have been arrested a sufficient length of time to enable the Austrians to muster a larger force; while Prussia, which had been hitherto passive, calmly submitting to insult upon insult, was beginning to rouse from her lethargy, and would in all probability at this time have joined the allies.

After leaving Olmütz, the general aspect of the country was far less wild and picturesque than the scenery of the mountainous region through which I had so recently passed; but it was fertile and well cultivated, the villages of the peasants were more frequent and better built, till we came to Brünn, or, as the Moravians call it, *Brno*, distant only nine posts from Vienna.

This fine old town, with its numerous churches, surmounted by their spires and shining cupolas, has a most city-like appearance; and commanded as it is by the lofty cathedral dedicated to St. Peter, situate on the summit of the Petersburg,—together with the bastile of Austria, the Spielberg, whose frowning towers seem to shut out hope to the captive, for the hill on which it is built rises to the height of a thousand feet above

the level of the sea,—renders the town at once picturesque and imposing.

Spielberg! how ominous is that name to the patriots of Poland, Hungary, and Lombardy! How many of the natives of these provinces have here lingered out the remnant of existence, with no voice of sympathy to cheer the dreary hours of confinement, with no other prospect of its termination than the grave!

Brünn is Vienna in miniature; like its great model, the city is surrounded by high walls and a deep *graban*, from which extends its fourteen faubourgs. It has also a *glacis* and *augarten*—the latter, a fine park, was thrown open to the public by Austria's greatest son, Joseph II. As at Vienna, we are also everywhere reminded of French valour by the battered and patched-up walls of the town and the Spielberg. The population of the town, including the garrison, is about forty thousand. It contains several fine churches, public buildings, and ancient monasteries; the latter, for the most part splendid edifices, are now appropriated to more useful purposes,—among others, the college of the Jesuits has been con-

verted into barracks and a riding-school for the cadets, while the Augustine monastery has become the residence of the governor.

How much has posterity to thank that great reformer of the abuses of the Romish church and clergy—Joseph II.! He first broke the chain with which superstition had bound the minds of his people—wrested from the priests the political and social power they had so arbitrarily assumed—dispersed and banished the Jesuits—and taught the Pope that his empire was no longer the *terra obedientiæ* which the chief of catholic Christendom was accustomed to call the Austrian monarchy. That enlightened sovereign only reigned ten years; yet such was his activity, and the number of his reforms, that nearly everything we find that can be termed great, good, and beautiful, in the Austrian empire, had its origin in his councils and acts. He first permitted his subjects to adore their Creator in whatever form of worship their separate creeds might dictate; he founded seminaries and public schools on the most liberal principles, promulgated an improved code of laws, reformed the abuses of the army, abolished feudal vas-

salage, encouraged the fine arts, commerce, and agriculture, and imparted an impulse to literature hitherto unknown in Austria. But what might not this fine empire have become if his successors, Leopold and Francis, had been guided by the same enlightened policy! for though the country at present may be pronounced in a prosperous state, yet its strength and resources, when we remember its capabilities, are still in a great degree dormant, as is the case with every other which has only recently emerged from centuries of bigotry and misrule. The mountain districts of the empire abound with mines of every description; the low lands, for the most part fertile, are well watered with meandering streams and navigable rivers, which afford every facility for commerce. The advantages acquired during the last few years, in consequence of steam navigation on the Danube, though great, would have been more considerable if the government had seconded England in firmly resisting the establishment of the Russians at the entrance of that river into the Black Sea.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Historical sketch of Moravia—Religious persecution of the natives—Aspect of the country—Industry of the inhabitants—Climate—Productions—Minerals—Singular caverns—Some account of the cholera—Departure for Vienna—The March-felde.

MORAVIA, of which Brünn is the capital, takes its name from the river Morava, or March; the population, together with that of Austrian Silesia, is computed to be upwards of two millions, both provinces being now incorporated under the same form of government. More than one half of the country is mountainous, while the other, with the exception of the vast plain called the March-felde, is beautifully undulating.

The inhabitants of Moravia are, for the most part, of Sclavonic origin, and speak the same

dialect as the Bohemians; this arises from the circumstance that Moravia formed part of the ancient kingdom of Bohemia, the eldest son of its sovereign styling himself Margraf of Moravia. In the early part of the sixteenth century, Bohemia, with its dependencies, Moravia and Silesia, reverted to the house of Austria, in the same manner as the Netherlands and Hungary, by marriage, which gave rise to the old saying, *Bella gerant alii tu felix Austria nube!*—a saying which in our own days was again illustrated by the union of Napoleon with Maria Louise, when the torch of discord was extinguished by lighting that of hymen.

Few countries suffered more on passing from one ruler to another than did Bohemia and Moravia by coming under the sceptre of the house of Austria. At that period the majority of the inhabitants were members of the reformed church, disciples of the renowned Huss and Hieronymus. The cruel bigot Ferdinand II., with his army of Jesuits, persecuted the unhappy dissenters from the church of Rome with the most relentless fury; he compelled numbers, under the most severe

penalties, to renounce their religion; thousands and tens of thousands, who preferred martyrdom to popery, were executed or expatriated; while those few that remained, and worshipped their Creator according to the tenets of their faith in secret, were doomed to see their towns and villages set in flames, at one time by their protestant friends, the Swedes, and at another by their enemies, the Jesuits, till there was scarcely a village left standing, nor a town that was not strongly fortified, throughout the whole country. Nor were Bohemia and Moravia the only sufferers; the fire of religious persecution gradually spread till all Germany was in a blaze. This was indeed a fearful period, for during the protracted period of thirty years that unhappy empire was exposed to all the horrors of one of the most cruel and sanguinary wars that history has to record; we will hope, for the sake of humanity, that the world will never witness another religious war. Indeed, the details left us by contemporary writers are so disgraceful to human nature, and so revolting to the feelings, as to be totally unfit for perusal in the present day.

Although of a considerably mitigated character, persecution continued to harass the few remaining protestants of these provinces till the reign of Joseph II., whose just and tolerant government has been the means of rendering Moravia one of the most prosperous provinces in the empire. Before his time, the inhabitants were so debased by slavery as to resemble Casti's "Animali Parlanti," (a biting satire upon the inhabitants of despotic countries,)—

> Lento rizzosi e fe questa parlata;
> Qualunque sia governo, a un porco piace,
> Se anche à costo di qualche bastonata
> Mangiar, beve e dormir lo lascia in pace.

At present, however, the Moravians, being no longer victims to the fanatic zeal of the Jesuits, nor subject to the whip of the feudal seignior, we may consider them among the happiest subjects of the Austrian empire.

With the exception of the mountainous districts, Moravia is, for the most part, fertile, and well-adapted to all the purposes of agriculture; it has also the advantage of being situated in the vicinity of the metropolis of a large and wealthy

empire; hence a profitable market is opened to the husbandman for the surplus produce of the land. Nor are the mountains either sterile or unproductive; the numerous flocks and herds reared on them are highly prized; and if the inhabitants of that inhospitable region have to combat with the severity of the climate, their industry procures for them all the necessaries of life, for their manufactures of linen and coarse woollen cloths, particularly the former, have acquired no little celebrity in Austria.

With respect to the climate of Moravia, it is impossible to give any description that will apply to the whole province, for being nearly surrounded by the Carpathians and the Riesengebirge mountains, some of whose peaks rise to a height of nearly five thousand feet, and as these are usually covered with snow at least eight months in the year, they materially influence the climate, and consequently the productions of the districts in their vicinity. The snowy summits of the Carpathians render the south and south-west wind (so genial in other climes) here exceedingly cold, which produces serious injury to the growth of vegeta-

tion in spring; but their evil effect is in a great degree counterbalanced by the Riesengebirge chain, which completely protects the land from the pernicious influence of the north and north-east wind; consequently, every description of grain is considered to attain the highest perfection, while the fruit and vegetables common to such a latitude are excellent, and if we may judge by the robust forms, healthy countenances, and longevity, of the natives, the climate is highly favourable to the physical constitution of man. The vine can only be cultivated in some favoured situations in the south; but the husbandman may console himself with the recollection that the flax and hemp grown here are superior to any other in the empire. Nor is the wool much less famous for its superior quality, for which the inhabitants are indebted to Prince Lichtenstein, through whose exertions the breed of sheep was considerably improved.

This excellent nobleman, it is said, enjoys an annual income of nearly a million and a half of florins, independently of the revenue derived from his little principality in the Tyrol, of which he is the sovereign, he resides chiefly at his splendid

residence, Eisgrub, in the vicinity of the romantic valley of the Taja, in Moravia, where he bears a high character for every generous quality which ought to distinguish a nobleman so amply endowed with the gifts of fortune.

Moravia, like Bohemia, abounds with every description of mineral bath: the mines also are very numerous; in addition to iron, copper, lead, and coal, there is vitriol, alum, sulphur, common salt, and glaubers salt, for the most part still left undisturbed in their native earth; while several species of marble, granite, porphyry, quartz, sandstone, basalt, potter's clay, and a fine species for the manufacture of porcelain, everywhere abound; and in this province alone, it is said, the genuine *lepidolith* is found.

On the mountains we meet with all the rare plants common to Switzerland and the Tyrol; and in the rivers and streams, with abundance of finely-flavoured trout: the cray-fish, owing to their great size and excellence, enjoy, like those of Hungary, great celebrity in the Vienna market; and, as may be supposed, a country so well wooded and thinly populated as Moravia, is plen-

tifully stocked with game of every description. Many of the rivers and streams that flow through this highly-picturesque province form very beautiful cascades, particularly those of the Morava. This fine river, which has its source in a romantic cavern, in the summit of the lofty Schneeberg, after running seven or eight miles, descends in a splendid cataract from a height little short of two thousand feet; there are also the waterfalls of the rivers Mora and the Vistula. When, in addition to these, we take into consideration the mountain districts, with their secluded glens, narrow passes, romantic valleys, their inhabitants, so original in their customs and manners, so remote from the great beaten track of tourists, how many sources of gratification does not this province, together with those through which I had passed since I left Turkey, open to the researches of the traveller who may have leisure to explore them, countries almost as little known in Europe as the interior of China!

The number of singular and curious caverns in the mountain districts of Moravia have long

since attracted the attention of the men of science in Germany, many of which contain the bones of animals, particularly those of elephants and bears, completely embedded in stalactites: when we contemplate these immense masses of spar, and remember they have been formed by single drops of water, the mind is lost when endeavouring to conjecture at what remote period these animals existed. Among the most interesting of these caverns is that called the *Slouper Tropfsteinhöhle*, near the little town of Sloup, not far distant from Olmütz, and well known in Moravia as one of the most famous stations in that country for the catholic devotees, who are accustomed to assemble there in thousands annually.

Nor is that called the Macocha, which lies between Willimowitz and Neuhof, in a romantic forest, less worthy attention. This cavern possesses the singular property of attracting electric matter; hence the peasants, whenever the atmosphere indicates an approaching storm of thunder and lightning, retreat with their flocks and herds to a considerable distance from such a dangerous

neighbourhood. The depth of this cavern is likewise so great, that when a stone is thrown into it, eight seconds elapse before it is heard to reach the water at the bottom, and if a pistol is fired into it the report heard is equal in loudness to that of a cannon, at the same time the smoke from the powder, uniting with the damp vapour of the cavern, remains nearly an hour on the top in the shape of a bell.

Moravia may indeed be termed the land of wonders: in addition to its caverns we may see, near Nicholsburg, a vineyard and a garden, including the vine and vegetables, which, in the manner of the moving bogs of Ireland, retreated from its original position and passed onward to another site, and completely covered the garden and vineyard of a neighbouring peasant. What a glorious subject would this have been for litigation? surely it would have puzzled the learned authorities of Westminster-hall to decide who was the right owner!

Nor was this the only house in the province which thought proper to go travelling; for a little

parsonage and garden, near the village of Kobily, belonging to the priest of the place, transported itself in the same way.

Since my entrance into the Austrian states, I repeatedly heard the most alarming reports of the progress of the cholera, particularly at Olmütz and Brünn, which it appeared had this year entirely changed the character of the victims of its attacks; in former years it sought its prey on the low banks of rivers and marshy districts, in dirty towns, with their narrow ill-ventilated streets, and among the poorer part of the population; whereas now it ascended the highest hills, and carried off, among many other persons of note, Graf Choteck, the rich bishop of Olmütz, together with the widow of a nobleman, in the prime of life, who resided in one of the healthiest districts in Upper Silesia. This timid woman, it appeared, in order to ensure her safety, shut herself up in her chateau, established a quarantine around it, and laid in a stock of provisions sufficient to last a siege; still, in spite of all her precaution, she fell a victim to the enemy she so much dreaded.

Various circumstances were related to me connected with the visitation of this pestilence which are rather singular, and some not easy to explain. In Vienna and Prague, it attacked the inhabitants of one side of a street, and spared those on the other. At Mittlewald, in Upper Bavaria, it came in the form of a fiery meteor, which exploded over the town, when immediately afterwards this fearful disease made its appearance, and spread with incredible rapidity, carrying sickness and death into nearly every house throughout the district. In another town in Upper Austria, it commenced its ravages after a thunder-storm, which left behind it a warm wind of a peculiarly disagreeable odour, that communicated infection to all those with whom it came incontact. These, indeed, are but a few of the details respecting the cholera related to me by German physicians, and several persons who had witnessed its effects.

The cholera is no doubt a very awful visitation; still I am inclined to think, as is the case with the plague, that if men were to summon a little more courage to their aid, pay less attention to

the nostrums of their sentence-pronouncing doctors, who no doubt frighten thousands of their timid patients into the grave, this disorder would not be so fatal as it is at present; and if it were not a subject too serious to be jested with, a population panic-struck with the cholera, especially the Germans, who are much inclined to exaggerate danger, might furnish very ludicrous scenes. Some, who probably had eaten too hearty a dinner, were to be seen flying, with pallid countenances, to the doctor; others, determined that it should not enter through their nasal organ, were incessantly employed in imbibing the odour of preventive essence, and not a few indulged in brandy; while many of the fair tremblers were industriously puffing, or rather trying to puff, pipes and cigars, hoping to ward off danger by tobacco smoke.

After leaving Brünn, there was little to attract the eye, or amuse the imagination, till I arrived at Vienna; the country gradually becomes less hilly, till the traveller enters the vast and fertile plain of Moravia, the *Marchfelde*, so famous for the number and fine flavour of its geese, a flavour

highly prized by the gourmands of Vienna; hence every town and village through which I passed was surrounded by its thousands and tens of thousands. This plain is, however, still more famous for the great battles of Esslingen, Aspern, and Wagram, of which it was the theatre during the late war. Here the scythe of death mowed down its thousands, to whose memory no monument remains, except a few cannon balls, preserved in the walls of some of the houses of the villagers.

After passing Stamersdorf, the imperial city developes itself to view; the lofty spire of St. Stephen's cathedral is seen proudly pointing to the heavens, while the back ground is occupied by the Kahlenberg and Leopoldberg mountains, with the snowy summits of the Styrian alps in the far distance. At every step the traveller is reminded of his approach to the gay city of Vienna by the animated scene before him; elegant carriages, well-mounted equestrians, and a respectably dressed multitude, are seen wandering in every direction in search of amusement, for no

other capital in Europe is more truly the head-quarters of pleasure than Vienna.

Having already described the most interesting objects of this fine city in my work on Germany, I found no new feature at my present visit worth recording. The nominal emperor, Ferdinand, still lingered between life and death, while the emperor *de facto*, Metternich, still maintained his ascendancy, in spite of the endeavours of his clever rival, Collowrath, to supplant him, notwithstanding he had the support of every intelligent liberal-minded man in the empire. The French princes had also visited the Austrian metropolis on a wife-hunting expedition; but the fair object of their pursuit preferred the sunny shores of Naples to the troubled banks of the Seine. To my great surprise, I found that the good people of Vienna had become, within the last few years, far more radical in their sentiments: at every soirée and public assembly, even at the coffee-houses, we hear a variety of very clever pasquinades, reflecting on the character of the late, and on the present emperor, and not a few on the all-

powerful Metternich himself. Even the far-famed speech of the Autocrat at Warsaw, the military occupation of Cracow, and the visit of the French princes to Vienna, were among some of the most prolific subjects sung by the Vienna muses.

It is not so much the biting satire of these epigrams, as the ludicrous manner in which they are repeated by the Viennese, in their peculiar dialect, that renders them so irresistibly ludicrous: indeed, I know of no people who are more accomplished in the art of pasquinading; but to translate these satirical effusions into English, or any other language, so as to preserve their point and piquancy, is impossible. Hence, liberty of speech in some measure supplies the absence of the freedom of the press; and should this penchant for jeu d'esprits continue, by and bye we shall find the salons of the clever and the intellectual among the inhabitants of Vienna forming a tribunal at which the character and conduct of public men will be tried; and if condemned, they may find to their cost, as did Napoleon, that a battery of epigrams is almost as difficult to combat as an attack of an uncontrolled press.

Having now conducted my readers to a metropolis where gaiety is the presiding priestess, I will bid him farewell. We have wandered together over the boundless steppe and the trackless sea; contemplated the splendour of imperial Russia, and the simplicity of the Caucasian mountaineer; surveyed the gilded minarets and gorgeous palaces of proud Stamboul, and the miserable hut of the humble serf. May we have learned by contemplating other lands, to prize our own,—by examining the defects of other constitutions, to admire the excellence of that which protects our properties and lives,—by beholding the admiration with which the native of a less happy country regards our institutions, to cherish with increased regard the hallowed name of—England, where the humblest peasant enjoys the same freedom, rights, and privileges, as the noblest lord,—where justice is equally administered to the rich and the poor, and where every man can say to his cot, however lowly—"This is my castle; who dare invade it?"

CHAPTER XXV.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

THE narrative of my travels being now concluded, I shall proceed to lay before my commercial readers a few details respecting the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, the facilities they offer for commerce, and the variety of their productions,—countries which, from their admirable situation, the fertility of the soil, and other advantages, open a channel to the boundless spirit of speculation which animates all classes of British traders, and must sooner or later occupy an important position among the nations of Europe. With regard to our own trading interests, how necessary is it in the present day, when we have as commercial competitors the inhabitants of the whole of civilized Europe, that we should seek for new markets for our productions,

and introduce among the half-barbarous natives of these hitherto neglected regions, our arts, civilization, and refinement, and assist in elevating them to political importance; for every amelioration in their social condition, every advance in wealth and intelligence, tends to multiply their wants, increase their commerce, and thereby render them still more effective as a barrier against Russian aggression; and how easily may all this be accomplished, with so powerful an ally as steam navigation.

Nor is it alone the provinces on the Lower Danube with which we should seek to cultivate more extensive commercial relations, but those in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea, and in Asia Minor,—countries for the most part fertile to exuberance, among the fairest of our hemisphere, and well adapted from their situation to all the purposes of commerce, but owing to our own supineness, in a great degree subject to the influence of Russia; to the same cause we may also attribute the fact that we have allowed her to forestall us in many of the markets of *this* part of Asia; and unless a reaction takes place, the

evil must go on increasing until our productions will not even be demanded; yet we all know that the power and the might of England depend more upon the industry and commerce of the people than even upon their well known bravery by sea and land; it is that industry and commerce which has not only elevated her to the proud pre-eminence of mistress of the seas, but enabled her, in the hour of peril, to arm and enlist under her banner a force which crushed the most gigantic power the earth had witnessed since the empire of the Romans. How desirable then is it that what may in truth be termed the sinews of our strength should occupy the attention of the government and of every enlightened man in the empire!

Both in this and my preceding work, I have shewn the numerous advantages, commercial and political, to be derived to England by a more extended intercourse with the inhabitants of the countries bordering on the Black Sea; I have described their productions, the facilities they offer to commerce, and the sympathy the people manifest towards us; but our misjudging govern-

ment, instead of taking advantage of the seizure of a British vessel to bring the question of the self-assumed sovereignty of Russia over the Black Sea to an issue, and to establish at least the equality of our national flag with that of Russia, has permitted the outrage to remain unatoned for to the present day; consequently, the superiority of our rival is thereby tacitly acknowledged. That the capture of a British merchant vessel, under any circumstances, left unavenged, has created a profound sensation throughout Europe and Asia cannot be denied; but then, say our advocates for peace, the vessel belonged to private individuals; and they endeavour to justify the aggression of Russia on the plea of her right to confiscate it, without considering the high political importance of the act to the interests and respectability of Great Britain.

The occurrence, however trifling it may have been regarded by some persons at home, has at least had the effect of directing the attention of the surrounding nations, with an increased earnestness, not unmixed with apprehension, to the aggression of Russia, to the danger to be dreaded

from such a neighbour, who is even permitted to beard mighty England on her own element with impunity.

It is true that Russia exercises at the present moment a powerful influence in Turkey and Persia, and maintains some ascendancy even in the councils of Louis-Philippe, and in Austria by means of M. de Metternich and a certain princess; still, in these countries her influence is with the government, not with the people. The Turks and Persians are not more attached to England by the ties of mutual interest and ancient treaties than the Austrians; and perhaps of every other there are none who have more cause to detest Russia, or who would assist with more readiness in humiliating her, than the French.

In Austria, the absolute power of M. de Metternich is on the decline; the inhabitants of that country are no longer the sensual epicureans of other days, who lived only for enjoyment, regardless of their political and commercial interests. Steam navigation, and the advantageous commerce it has been the means of opening to them in the countries of the east, has wrought a change

in the minds of the people which will lead to important results. Several members of the Austrian cabinet, particularly M. de Kollowrath, are known to be equally aware of the advantages of oriental commerce; this minister is also regarded as a friend to liberal institutions, and none among his colleagues better understands the true policy of Austria, or would concur more readily in any plan to check the ambition of Russia; and assuredly he has no reason to be contented with the armaments and fortifications at Sevastopol and other ports on the Black Sea, nor with the designs of that power on the independence of Moldavia and Wallachia, nor with the new Russian settlement now forming at the mouth of the Danube, in direct opposition to the treaty of Adrianople, a settlement which threatens to control the whole commerce of that river. Hence, however much Austria may be united with Russia in the principles of despotism, from her situation and interests, both of which place her in hostility to Russia, she is, in spite of any volition of her own, the natural ally of constitutional England. If we extend our view towards the other countries of

Europe, we shall not find them animated by any more cordial feeling towards Russian policy than distrust and hatred. Even Prussia, has been drawn into the same vortex of feeling, notwithstanding the close family alliance established between that power and Russia, for we see her thwarting the views of her bullying neighbour on every occasion where her interests are concerned, having very recently extorted from the Russian government the modification of a tariff which, if allowed to remain in existence, would have materially injured the commerce of those Prussian provinces on the Russian frontier.

Surely then we must deem it expedient that Great Britain should extend her powerful influence to such allies in feeling and interests, allies which she would find, in the event of a war with our Muscovite rival, sincere in their hostility, and energetic in their support. But above all, our attention should be directed to the half-civilized countries on the Black Sea and the Lower Danube, countries which in all probability will, in a few years, owing to their unprotected situation, and remoteness from the political world of

Europe, become merged in the already overgrown empire of Russia. Her acquisition of these countries, and her projects of universal dominion, will be best prevented by the formation of commercial treaties between them and England, for commerce, at the same time that it enriches, enlightens a people, and consequently elevates them from the condition of abject slaves to that of the uncompromising enemies of despotism.

If we refuse to extend towards them our assistance, to impart to them the same independence, the same liberality of character, the same patriotism and enlightened principles of freedom we possess ourselves, we advance the projects of Russia, and accelerate our own downfall—for, as I have already said, the strength of England is her commerce, that great civilizer of nations, and she can only reckon on those states that aspire to the freedom we enjoy as our real friends, a desire undoubtedly entertained by the whole of the commercial inhabitants of civilized Europe, however closely their rulers may be harnessed to the chariot wheels of despotic Russia. For nations may be compared to children, nay even

to animals; in proportion as they advance in intelligence, they become impatient of parental rule, and solicitous to provide for themselves; in short, every state that extorts from its despotic sovereign a free, liberal code of laws, weakens the power of Russia, which is based, not on civilization, but on barbarism,—not on constitutional liberty, but on debased slavery.

Having concluded our preliminary observations, we will turn our attention to the commercial advantages of Moldavia and Wallachia, now open to British industry and speculation, thanks to the steam navigation of the Danube. We have already said that the two principalities contain a population of between three and four millions, a very insignificant number when we consider the great fertility and vast capabilities of these countries. The exports consist principally of corn, wool, tallow, linseed, and hemp; honey, wax, tobacco, and ox-hides; sheep, goat, and hare skins, salt meat, potass, soda, leeches, and cheese. Braila, or Ibrail of the Turks, in Wallachia, and Galatz in Moldavia, both situated on the Danube, and only four leagues distant from each other, are

well adapted for ports, as ships of two hundred and fifty tons burden can enter them with the greatest facility, and being protected by islands, the space between the towns offers a safe harbour for vessels during winter, since they are not liable to come in collision with the masses of ice that are carried down the river in spring; navigation, however, is generally interrupted by the frost for two or three months, but rarely during a longer period.

Since the Austrian steam navigation has been established on the Danube, these towns are daily rising in importance; and, having fertile countries in their rear, cannot fail advancing in prosperity, as they afford, not only to the inhabitants of the principalities, but to those of the Buckowina, Transylvania, and parts of Hungary, an outlet for the surplus produce of the soil.

The custom-house duty is about three per cent.; the money is the same as in Turkey—paras and piastres: the ducat at Galatz is worth thirty-nine piastres, and at Bucharest and Brailow, thirty-one and a half. It is usual for the foreign merchant, in his trading transactions with the natives, to make contracts with them before the

tribunals of commerce established at Galatz and Brailow; and with foreigners established in the principalities they must be made in presence of their respective consuls. If any difference arises, the foreign merchant should endeavour to come to an amicable arrangement, as there are several courts of appeal, and the law processes are both protracted and expensive.

Corn forms at present the chief article of export in both the principalities. The quality of the wheat is equal to that of Russia sold at Odessa; the best sort is sent to the Italian ports in the Mediterranean, and that of inferior quality chiefly to Constantinople. Maize is of the same species as that cultivated in Persia, but inferior in quality; the barley and oats are not equal to those of Russia, but this is said to arise from the want of care and attention on the part of the agriculturist, who neglects preparing the land previous to sowing it, together with weeding during the summer, &c. A very considerable improvement has, however, taken place in the cultivation of these articles by some proprietors, which will no doubt become general

as the demand increases, because corn of every description can be grown in these provinces capable of bearing a comparison with that of any other country, as it is impossible to surpass the fertility of the soil. The exportation depends more on the demand than on the quantity of grain produced; hence no specific amount can be mentioned; still it is considerable, and averages one million of Constantinople Kilos.

Wool is the product next in importance, which finds its way chiefly to Austria, England, and France, these countries taking about a million and a half of okas annually. The exportation of tallow has so increased within the last few years, that it now amounts to from eight hundred to a thousand okas* annually from Wallachia; but not more than three hundred from Moldavia, as great numbers of live cattle are annually exported from that principality to Hungary and Galicia.

Hemp and linseed thrive everywhere, and are considered superior to the same articles purchased at Odessa. The exportation of the latter

* Oka; two pounds fourteen ounces English.

is also increasing, and may be reckoned at present something more than a million of okas annually.

Honey and wax also form important articles of commerce; the latter is considered the finest in Europe, particularly that produced on the high lands of Moldavia, which is generally bought up for the Constantinople market, — its fragrant odour, like that of the Caucasian, being so highly prized by the Turks that they use it as a perfume. The green wax produced in Moldavia is similar to that I described as found in the mountains of Circassia, and is also highly prized in Constantinople.

The tobacco, similar to the Hungarian, and inferior to the Turkish, is usually sent to the Morea and Constantinople, where it is manufactured into cigars.

The greater part of the ox and goat hides find a sale in Austria, and are there much esteemed; but those of sheep, being used by the peasants as clothing, are much in request for home consumption; consequently, the foreign merchant is not likely to make with them a profitable speculation; but he may purchase abundance of hare-

skins, as these animals abound in both the principalities, the number in some years amounts to four thousand.

Salt meat is usually sent to Constantinople, or sold to the owners of ships that visit the ports.

The exports in potass and soda are inconsiderable, owing to the want of manufacturers; indeed, no supply can be obtained unless a contract is previously made, and even then part of the money must be advanced. Should leeches, however, be the merchandize desired by the trader, he may obtain them in any quantity: at present they are sent to all parts of Germany and France; we usually get them from Hamburg, but how much more profitable would it be for the merchant to import them direct from the principalities! Cheese, of which the farmers make different kinds, supplies the markets in the Levant. Notwithstanding the culture of the vine is very much neglected, the wine made in Moldavia finds a ready sale in Odessa and the other Russian ports on the Black Sea.

When we take into consideration that the whole of these native products are exchanged for foreign merchandize, how profitable must be the commerce! To which we may add, that trade is yet

in its infancy; indeed, it is only carried on through agents, the purchaser being unable to make his contracts in any other way, owing to the gross ignorance of the peasants. The country, also, is still demoralized and in disorder, agriculture neglected, and the general improvement of the people culpably unheeded by the dominii. All these evils will no doubt be gradually removed when the advantages of commerce become more generally known and appreciated, especially when the boyars, the lords of the soil, awake to the real interests of their country.

Like every other half-civilized people, or at least like those who are ignorant of intellectual enjoyments, the natives of these principalities, at least the boyars and trading classes, indulge in great extravagance of dress. They decorate their persons with the most valuable furs of Russia, the most splendid stuffs and muslins of India and Stamboul, the finest European embroidery of silver and gold, the most showy colours in satin, silks, velvets, and printed calicoes; jewels, pearls, watches, and trinkets, without number;—the greater part of the latter are manufactured at

Vienna and Venice. Besides these, the demand for woollen cloths, fine linen, &c., is very great; to which we may add, iron wares, coffee, tea, sugar, and various other articles; the inhabitants thus manifesting a predilection for luxury and splendour equally advantageous to the manufacturer and to the merchant.

Mr. Harbottle estimates the annual revenue of Wallachia alone to amount to between fourteen and fifteen millions of piastres: after paying the tribute due to the port and the other current expenses of the state, the surplus is left to accumulate, which ought, according to the provision in the *Reglement Organique*, not to be less than a million annually. This surplus capital is left to accumulate for the purpose of providing for the tribute payable to the Porte, which is 439,500 piastres annually, and other exigences of the state.

The same gentleman says that Wallachia is divided into eighteen districts, of which there are thirteen in Great, and five in Little, Wallachia. In each of these there is an Ispravnick (a superior magistrate), with numerous subalterns attached

to his office, whose duty is to keep the peace, enforce the order of the executive, collect the taxes, and investigate matters relating to criminal and civil cases.

In each district there is also a tribunal or court for adjudicating in all matters according to the evidence submitted to them, similar to those in Russia, and which were introduced by that power during their military occupation of the principalities. Owing to the multiplicity of written documents, and other vexations that this mode of administering justice gives rise to, and which cause at the same time unnecessary delay, and very great expense to the suitors in consequence of the fees and bribes requisite to be paid at every stage of the proceedings, it is extremely unpopular with the people, who were so long accustomed to the summary mode of deciding causes pursued by the Turkish government. Hence they preferred occasionally submitting even to some arbitrary act of injustice, arising from the caprice or partiality of the Turkish judge, to the present tedious plan of conducting a cause by means of written evidence, which not unfrequently ruins both liti-

gants, and gives to the man who is best able to bribe the courts a favourable verdict, whether right and equity entitle him to it or not.

The soil of Wallachia, particularly in the plains extending from the banks of the Danube to the base of the Carpathians, is exceedingly fertile, and well adapted for the production of every species of grain. Notwithstanding there is every facility for bringing the produce to market, the peasantry, owing to their very few wants and natural indolence, do not trouble themselves to raise more than is requisite for their own use, and will serve to realize a sufficient sum for the payment of the rent and taxes, which are very trifling.

By the new regulation, each head of a family surrenders a tithe of the produce in kind, and is bound to labour twelve days for the landed proprietor, or to pay a specific sum of thirty-six piastres. For these two considerations, which may be said to constitute the rent, he is allowed in some districts to cultivate as much land as he feels disposed; and in others, where the boundary of the estate is limited, and the country more densely populated, as much as may fall to his share in

the general partition among his fellow-villagers. According to the calculation of the boyars, each *head* of a family produces by his industry about a hundred piastres net revenue.

In the districts bordering on the Danube, there are immense tracts of land entirely devoted to grazing, dreary beyond description, and without a single habitation, save here and there the hut of a shepherd. Here are pastured vast herds of cattle and flocks of sheep; the former are usually slaughtered in the autumn, merely for the hides and tallow,—the latter are kept chiefly for the wool, and sold, after being sheared, for the Constantinople market.

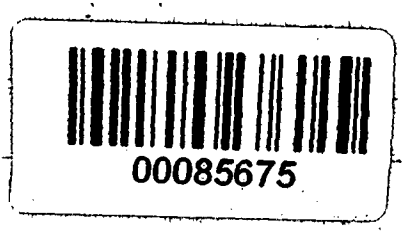
The country towards the mountains is covered with splendid forests of oak and beech; the undulating hills at their base are cultivated to a small extent with vines, which produce, notwithstanding the ignorance of the peasants in making it, a tolerable wine, that might serve as a profitable article of speculation, though at present it is only used as the common beverage of the peasants.

Since the promulgation of the *Reglement Or-*

ganique, foreigners may possess lands, and at the expiration of ten years they become entitled to the privilege of naturalization. From the great fertility of the soil, and the low price of land, an intelligent cultivator, who might be inclined to embark in such an undertaking, would be certain of realizing large profits, as would also the man who might speculate in purchasing cattle and then exporting the meat salted, together with tallow and skins. In short, these principalities, and also Servia and Bulgaria, on the opposite bank of the Danube — countries still in their infancy, and abounding with vast natural resources — offer many advantages to commercial enterprise, many inducements to the colonist, and the prospect, to the man whose well-directed industry shall conduct these resources into profitable channels, not only of competence, but wealth.

THE END.

T. C. Savill, Printer, 107, St. Martin's Lane.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